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An Early Sufi Concept of Qalb: Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's Map of the Heart

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Abstract

The Spiritual Journey is of pivotal importance to Sufis. Various mystics have conceived of this journey in different ways. For one early Sufi, al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, this journey is conceived as an inward one through the concentric circles of the Heart. The focus of this thesis is on Tirmidhī's *maqāmāt al-qalb*, the "Stations of the Heart" as described in his work the *Bayān al-Farq Bayn al-Ṣadr wa al-Qalb wa al-Fu'ād wa al-Lubb* (*The Elucidation of the Differences Between the Chest, the Heart, the Inner Heart, and the Intellect*). To appraise Tirmidhī's elucidation, the discussion begins with a mentioning of the concept of the Heart in the Near East before Islam (in the Ancient Egyptian, Hindu, and Jewish traditions) and Tirmidhī's Muslim precursors and contemporaries who also dealt with this topic.

Explication of the *Bayān al-Farq* itself is centered on the text itself, which follows an initial discussion of the usage of the terms *ṣadr, qalb, fu'ād,* and *lubb* in the Arabic language as well as a discussion of how the terms are used in the *Qur'ān.*

Central to the subject matter of the *Bayān al-Farq* is not only Tirmidhī's elucidation of the differences between these layers of the Heart, but also his concepts of light and knowledge (*nūr* and *ma'rifat*).

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Résumé

Le concept du Voyage Spirituel revêt une importance capitale pour les Soufis. Ce voyage a été représenté, chez les mystiques, de nombreuses façons. Pour l'un des Soufis des premiers siècles, à savoir al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, ce voyage est considéré comme un cheminement intérieur qui parcourt les cercles concentriques du coeur.

Le présent mémoire vise à mettre en valeur les *maqāmāt al-qalb* – c'est-à-dire, les « stations du coeur » – tels que décrits par al-Tirmidhī dans son oeuvre *Bayān al-Farq bayn al-Ṣadr wa-l-Qalb wa-l-Fu'ād wa-l-Lubb* (« *L'Élucidation de la différence entre la poitrine, le coeur, le tréfonds et l'intellect* »). Afin d'apprécier cette explication, nous commençons par passer en revue la conception du coeur qui prévalait au Proche-Orient antérieurement à l'avènement de l'Islam (c.-à-d. dans les anciennes traditions égyptienne, hindou et juive), ainsi que la représentation que s'en faisaient les Musulmans précurseurs et contemporains d'al-Tirmidhī en traitant du même sujet.

L'explication du *Bayān al-Farq* se fonde principalement sur le texte même. Cette explication est précédée d'une discussion préliminaire sur l'usage des termes de *ṣadr*, *qalb*, *fu'ād* et *lubb* dans la langue arabe, ainsi que d'une discussion sur la manière dont ces mêmes termes sont employés dans le Coran.

L'essentiel du sujet traité par le *Bayān al-Farq* ne tient pas uniquement à faire la différence entre les nombreuses couches du coeur, mais aussi à expliciter la façon dont al-Tirmidhī représente les concepts de la lumière (*nūr*) et de la connaissance (*ma'rifa*).

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I do not feel this is my work alone, but was only possible through the love and support of others. In a sense, it is a culmination of a sort of the path I have been on since I realized my love of knowledge. To begin, I must thank the One who endowed me with the ability to embark on such an endeavor.

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Words Cannot Express My Gratitude!

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This work is dedicated to *Édes Nagyápam*, my Grandfather
János Gomány, whose Heart was too large to survive
long in this world. It is also dedicated to my
Babíčka, Helen Pavlíšová, whose love
I have felt over space and time.

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"Leave your deep and absurd trust in the senses, with their language of dot and dash, which may possibly report fact but can never communicate personality. If philosophy has taught you anything, she has surely taught you the length of her tether, and the impossibility of attaining the doubtless admirable grazing land which lies beyond it."[1]

"There is a piece of flesh in the body if it becomes good (reformed) the whole body is good but if it gets spoiled the whole body gets spoilt and that is the heart."[2]

I. Introduction

Sufis have been concerned with the notion of the "heart" as a metaphysical entity since their inception. Sufism has been allied with "*tasfiyat al-qulūb*" (purification of hearts).[3] Masters of Sufism have been referred to as "masters of the heart"[4]. It is obvious then, that the heart is not just a piece of flesh in the chest, but that it has a metaphysical property to it. What are its properties? When Sufis refer to the Heart (*qalb*), what do they mean by this?

Although he was not the first to discuss this concept, Abū 'Abd Allah Muḥammad b. 'Ali b. al-Ḥasan b. Bishr b. Ḥārūn al-Tirmidhī, best known as Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī (d. 300 AH/910 CE) (not to be confused with the famous *Muḥaddith* Abū 'Isa Muḥammad b.Sahl al-Tirmidhī, d. 279/892) was one of the first Sufis to explicitly outline a Map of the Heart and discuss its levels (*maqāmāt*). Although he makes reference to the Heart in more than one of his books, his *Bayān al-Farq Bayn al-Ṣadr wa al-Qalb wa al-Fu'ād wa al-Lubb*[5] (*The Elucidation of the Difference between the Breast, the Heart, the Inner Heart, and the Intellect*) most explicitly deals with this concept of *Qalb*.[6] This work

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[1]Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*, 4th ed. (London: Methuen &Co, 1928), 28.
[2]Saḥīḥ al-Bukharī, 2nd ed., Muhammad Muhsin Khan, trans. (al-Medina al-Munauwara, Pakistan: Sethi Straw Board Mills, 1973), 44.
[3]Carl W. Ernst, *The Shambhala Guide to Sufism*, (Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1997), 23.
[4]Ibid., 29.
[5]Hereafter to be referred to as the *Bayān al-Farq*
[6]As it is difficult and perhaps a little misleading to use the English "equivalents" of the terms *qalb, ṣadr, fu'ād,* and *lubb*, I prefer to retain the use of the Arabic terms. A further elucidation of the terms will occur later, but for now, it may be said that: *ṣadr*=chest,

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will be the focus of the present study (although other of his works will be referred to). What are the original meanings of these terms? How are they used in the *Qur'ān*? How does Tirmidhī use these terms? These questions are pivotal to the present study.

i. Literature Review

Previous research on the term "*Qalb*" and its use in Sufism is relatively sparse. Much ink has been spent on discussions of the Heart referring to Love, especially in reference to Rumi and other Sufis who focus on Love for the Divine. However, discussion of *Qalb* as a centre of awareness, insight, *ma'rifa* (gnosis), is relatively rare.[7] Passing references are made to it in introductory books on Sufism, such as Annemarie Schimmel's *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*,[8] Martin Lings' *What is Sufism?*[9] (which includes a chapter on the subject), Carl Ernst's *Shambhala Guide to Sufism*[10], Michael Sells' *Early Islamic Mysticism*[11], and Titus Burkhardt's *An Introduction to Sufi Doctrine*[12]. Massignon deals with this concept to a degree in his four volume *The Passion of al-Ḥallāj*[13] and his *Essay on the Origins of the Technical Language of Islamic Mysticism.*[14] Sachiko Murata in her book *The Tao of Islam*[15]devotes a chapter to the Heart (with special reference to Ibn 'Arabi's concept).

Scholarly research on Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī is relatively sparse as well, but there are some notable exceptions. Nicholas Heer has written a biographical sketch of Ḥakīm al-

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qalb=heart, *fu'ād*=inner heart, and *lubb*=intellect.

[7]It must be noted that my review of the existing literature is confined mostly to English. However, my research has not uncovered any major works on the concept of *Qalb* in any other European languages.

[8](Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975)

[9](London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1981)

[10](Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1997)

[11](Majwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1996)

[12](Lahore: Ashraf Press, 1959)

[13]Herbert Mason (trans.) (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982)

[14]Benjamin Clark (trans.) (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997)

[15](Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992)

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Tirmidhī[16] as well as editing[17] and later translating Tirmidhī's *Bayān al Farq.*[18] Bernd Radtke appears to have done the most extensive scholarly research on Tirmidhī (at least in a European language). In *Al-Ḥakīm at-Tirmidhī, ein islamischer Theosoph des 3./9. Jahrhunderts*[19] he delves into the life of Tirmidhī, the concepts most central to his thought, and lists his works. Two of al-Tirmidhi's major works, the *Bad' Sha'n* and *Khatm al-Awliyā'* have been translated by Radtke and John O'Kane.[20]

Muhammad Ibraheem El-Geyoushi has written articles on Tirmidhī's concept of *Wilāya*[21], his influence on Sufi thought[22], his concept of the struggle of *qalb* and *nafs*[23],a summary of Tirmidhi's map of the heart[24] and his concept of gnosis.[25] In addition, Sara Sviri, a scholar from Israel has also done research into Tirmidhī. Her Ph.D. dissertation is entitled "The Mystical Psychology of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī"[26] and she has also written an article about Tirmidhī and his relation to the Malāmatiyya.[27]

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[16]"Some Biographical and Bibliographical Notes on al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī" in *The World of Islam: Studies in Honor of Philip K. Hitti*, James Kritzeck and R. Bayly Winder (eds.) (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1959)
[17](Cairo: Dar Akhyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabī, 1958)
[18]*Muslim World* v.LI no. 1 (January, 1961): 25-36, 83-91, 163-172, 244-258.
[19](Freiburg, 1980)
[20](Richmond: Curzon Press, 1996)
[21]"Al-Tirmidhī"s Theory of Saints and Sainthood" *Islamic Quarterly* XV no.1 (1971): 17-61
[22]"The Influence of al-Tirmidhī on Sufi Thought" *Islamic Quarterly* XX no.3 (1978): 104-115
[23]"Al-Tirmidhī's Conception of the Struggle Between *Qalb* and *Nafs*" *Islamic Quarterly* XVIII no. 3&4 (1974):3-14.
[24]"Al Tirmidhī's Conception of the Areas of Interiority" *Islamic Quarterly* XVI no.3&4 (1972): 168-188.
[25]"Al Tirmidhī's Theory of Gnosis" *Islamic Quarterly* XV no.4 (1971): 164-188.
[26]Inquiry was made into the possibility of obtaining the dissertation (which was completed in Tel Aviv in 1978) but as it is from a university out of North America (and appeared not to have been purchased by Harvard or CRL) it was not possible.
[27]"Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī and the Malāmatī Movement" in Leonard Lewisohn (ed.) *Classical Persian Sufism: from its Origins to Rumi* (London and New York: Khaniqahi Nimatullahi Publications:1993) 583-614.

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ii. Methodological Concerns

> In order to decipher a religious symbol, not only is it necessary to take into consideration all of its contexts, but one must above all reflect on the meanings that this symbol has had in what we might call its 'maturity.'[28]

Perhaps it is best to take Eliade's advice and attempt to look at as many aspects of Tirmidhī's usage of the terms to be discussed here. The real focus of this thesis is to analyze how the terms *ṣadr*, *qalb*, *fu'ād*, and *lubb* are used by Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. How did he understand these terms (as they are used in the *Bayān al-Farq*)? To do this, analysis will be done and comparisons made on the usage of the terms from the view of the traditional usage of the terms in Arabic through consultation of the *Lisān al-'Arab*[29] as well as Lane's *Lexicon*.[30] Consultation of the Arabic Concordance of the *Qur'ān*[31] will also be part of this study to consider how the terms are used in the *Qur'ān*. Once this is achieved, Tirmidhī's use of the term will be analyzed and comparisons drawn between the "traditional/linguistic" usage, the *Qur'ānic* usage, and Tirmidhī's usage.

Emphasis will be laid on the English translation of the *Bayān al-Farq*, but the Arabic original will be consulted as well to ascertain better Tirmidhī's descriptions of the *maqāmāt al-qalb* in the original. As it is not possible at this juncture to deal with Arabic sources predominantly, reliance must be placed on works in English or in translation. Nicholas Heer is known for the excellence of his scholarship, as is Bernd Radtke (the

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[28]Mircea Eliade "Methodological Remarks on the Study of Religious Symbolism" in Mircea Eliade and Joseph M. Kitagawa (eds.), *The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959) 86-107. This quote is found on page 107.

[29]Ibn Manẓūr. *Lisān al-'Arab al-Muḥīṭ* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl &Dār Lisān al-'Arab, 1988)

[30]Edward William Lane *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (London and Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1863)

[31]Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *Al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li-Alfāẓ al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrī, 1364). Unless otherwise stated, all translations of the *Qur'ān* are taken from Abdullah Yusuf Ali's *The Holy Qur'ān: Text, Translation, and Commentary* (Washington, D.C.: The American International Printing Company, 1946).

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two major sources to be relied upon for works translated into English from Arabic). Other sources originally in Arabic and translated (for example Hujwīrī's *Kashf al-Maḥjūb*) are secondary to the present study.

As Annemarie Schimmel has pointed out, there is a profound difficulty in truly analyzing and ascertaining what is meant in Sufi texts as they are based on experience of the Divine by the Sufi himself.[32] This does not preclude the use of phenomenology to further the understanding of Sufism, especially Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī and his concepts. Phenomenology centres itself on interpreting the world based on the views of the individual (or religious group) to be studied. Thus, the phenomenologist, when he is

"... confronted with one religious phenomenon or another, confines himself to 'approaching' it and divining its meaning."[33] It is hoped that by assessing these three reference points to this topic, it will be possible to "divine" the meanings of *ṣadr*, *qalb*, *fu'ād*, and *lubb*.

In addition to the comparative and phenomenological approaches, a third, related approach will be utilized to facilitate understanding of the topic at hand: Semantics. As Toshihiko Izutzu defines it, Semantics closely allies itself with phenomenology.

> ...semantics as I understand it is an analytic study of the key terms of a language with a view to arriving eventually at a conceptual grasp of the *Weltanschauung* or world view of the people who use that language as a tool not only of speaking and thinking, but more important still, of conceptualizing and interpreting the world that surrounds them. Semantics, thus understood, is a kind of *Weltanschauungslehre*, a study of the nature and structure of the world view of a nation at this or that significant period of its history conducted by means of a methodological analysis of the major cultural concepts the nation has produced for itself and crystallized into the key words of its language.[34]

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[32]Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions Of Islam*,7.
[33]Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), xv.
[34]Toshihiko Izutzu, *God and Man in the Koran: Semantics of the Koranic Weltanschauung* (Tokyo: Keio Kistiture of Cultural and Linguistic Studies, 1964), 11. In this work he also describes "historical semantics", the analysis of the way a term is

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Semantics is not confined to etymology, but rather focuses itself on the "relational" meaning of a word (which refers to connotative meaning which becomes allied with a word and metamorphoses over time) rather than the "basic" meaning (which refers to the essential, denotative meaning of the word, a meaning which does not alter)[35]. Languages are constantly evolving and, as Izutzu points out, the Revelation of the Qur'ān brought about a fundamental change in the "relational" meanings of some words.[36] These "relational" meanings concerning the heart will be the centre of the present study.

II. The Life and Influence of Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī

Before delving into the life and contributions of Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, it is necessary to recount briefly some of the major figures who preceded Tirmidhī in his concept of the Heart as a centre of gnosis and inspiration.[37]

i. Some Pre-Islamic Conceptions[38]

Concepts of the Heart as a centre of intelligence, inspiration, and place of communion with the Divine appear to abound in the Ancient World. Three such religious systems are those of Ancient Egypt, Hinduism, and Judaism.

In Egypt before the influence of Christianity or Islam, the people worshipped many emanations of the Divine. One of these was "Sia", the god of understanding. Sia

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used through its history in order to ascertain changes in meanings. Unfortunately, at present this is not feasible, but this would be a interesting area of research if Arabic was more readily understood by the researcher. Inquiry of this sort would involve research into Pre-Islamic and Islamic poetry and philosophy to acquire an understanding of the term *Qalb* over a broader and more thorough space than is possible at present.

[35]Ibid., 20.

[36]Ibid., 13 ff.

[37]A thorough, comprehensive overview of all who preceded Tirmidhī is beyond the scope of this study.

[38]Although it is not the intention to attempt a comparative analysis or to insinuate that Tirmidhī drew influence from these cultural concepts (which is lacking in proof), it is perhaps important to draw attention to the fact that Tirmidhī (or the *Qur'ān* or Islam in general) was not the first to conceive the Heart in this fashion.

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resided in the heart and was especially present at the time of the "weighing of the heart" after death. If the person's heart was deemed worthy, that is, heavy enough to tip the balance, the person would unite with Sia.[39] For the unfortunate whose heart did not tip the scales, "Am-mit", a creature part crocodile, lion, and hippopotamus ate the heart.[40]

> In Egyptian *ab*, which literally means 'heart', is used to express wish, longing, desire, lust, will, courage, mind, wisdom, sense, intelligence, manner, disposition, attention, intention, etc., and it is clear that the heart was regarded as the seat of life, as the home of the passions, both good and bad, and as the seat of the pleasures derived from eating, drinking, and the carnal appetite. There appears to have been a soul which was connected with the heart...the heart-soul.[41]

Thus, the heart was considered the centre of the being, a "place" where practically all of the parts of the human (and being human) were centred and could commute with the Divine (if deemed worthy). The Divine was considered at work in the person, and the person's nature was determined by the heart. [42] A heart could be open or closed, as Ptah-hotep, an Old Kingdom sage said: "It is the heart which brings up its lord as one who hears [or] one who does not hear."[43] There is an accountability implicit here, as well as a notion of fate being determined by the Divine. Ethics and accountability for actions and the status of the heart were of concern.

It is also interesting to note that when the body was mummified, all of the internal organs were removed and embalmed separately except for the heart.[44] The exact meaning of this is unclear, but it points to the fact that the heart was considered, at the

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[39]Michel Meslin "Heart" (Kristine Andersons, trans.), in Mircea Eliade (ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987) v.6 234-237.
[40]E. A. Wallis Budge, *Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection* (In Two Volumes) (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1973), 328.
[41]Ibid, 130-131.
[42]Siegfried Morenz, Ann E. Keep (trans.), *Egyptian Religion* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1973), 64.
[43]Ibid., 65.
[44]Ibid., 199.

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very least, an organ utterly unique in comparison to the others. Perhaps if this was the seat of the soul it was necessary to keep it with the body.

Manas is a Sanskrit word denoting the internal organ of perception, the sixth sense beyond the physical five and is, at times, said to reside in the heart.[45] The concept of *manas* is especially important in the Yoga systems, as it is an intermediary between perception and physical activity and it coordinates both biological and psychic functions. Through concentration (and other yogic exercises), *sattva* (the quality of luminosity, purity) can begin to predominate in the person and *manas appears.*[46]

In one system of description of the body, there are one hundred and one arteries, one which leads to the crown of the head. If this artery can be opened, immortality may be attained.[47] It is apparent that *Manas* is not a physical, but rather a metaphysical entity. One of the major *cakras* of the body is the lotus *cakra* of the heart, which may be opened by concentrating on the Deity and awaiting inspiration.[48] "The heart is the secret place of their inspiration, where hymns are prepared to offer the gods,...the place of divine vision, which is only given by grace by those who practice self-renunciation."[49] The Divine becomes immanent in the Heart.[50]

"In the Bible, the work *lev* (heart) occurs 1,024 times, ..."[51] This obviously important word connotes the centre of knowledge and understanding, the place where human and Divine may converge. Within it lies the psychological, intellectual, and

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[45]In Indian thought few concepts are uniform across differing systems. Thus, while *manas* may reside in the head, it is of often also allied with the heart. Massignon, in his *Essay on the Origins of the Technical Language of Islamic Mysticism*, equates *manas* with *qalb* as both "heart" and "intellect" (p.65).
[46]Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* (New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1958), 20.
[47]Ibid., 120.
[48]Ibid., 70-72.
[49]Meslin, 234.
[50]Ibid., 235.
[51]Ibid.

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moral life of the individual. It can be hardened by the Divine will, a state which may be the result of the Divine decree, or in response to some action on the part of the individual.[52]

ii. Tirmidhī's Muslim Precursors[53]

The concepts *ṣadr*, *qalb*, *fu'ād*, and *lubb* occur in the *Qur'ān*[54] and *Ḥadīth*. Thus, they have existed and have had some manner of religious connotation among Arabic speaking people since at least the time of the revelation of the *Qur'ān*. Perhaps the earliest person to more deeply consider these terms and concentrate effort on elucidating their meanings was Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728). Considered to be one of the earliest theorists of theology (especially for his ideas on pre-destination), Ḥasan al-Baṣrī is also considered one of the earliest elucidators of Sufi theory. As an early (or perhaps the Proto) Sufi, he is said to have practiced asceticism and generally distained the pull of the sensual world. [55]

His concern with purification of the heart in order to obtain knowledge of God is centred on his idea of *"ilm al-qulūb"*, the "knowledge of Hearts". The earliest Muslim explication of a moral psychology, this theory centres upon the use of supererogatory acts to draw closer to the Divine. As Massignon[56] points out, at this stage of Muslim meditating and theorizing about God and His relation to humans, the focus was not yet on the codification of the form of the ritual or assessing its inner meaning. Rather, the

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[52]Ibid.

[53]This is intended as a discussion of some of the major Muslim theorizers on the Heart and its significance. By no means are these theorists the only Muslims who discussed these notions.

[54]The *Qur'ānic* notions of these terms will be discussed more closely later. For now the discussion will be confined to the thinkers who picked out these concepts and began to focus on them after the time of Muḥammad.

[55]This was taken to the extent that Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and his followers were referred to as "*al-bakka'ūn*", "those who weep", following the *Ḥadīth*, "If ye knew what I know, ye would laugh little and weep much." (Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*,31).

[56]Massignon, *The Passion of al-Ḥallāj*, v.3, 223

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focus for Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and others at this time was to examine how performing the rites and rituals of Islam effected the psychology of the practitioner. In addition, at this juncture, there was no attempt to dogmatize the processes or stages involved in reaching the Divine.

Removal from the heart of all which is repugnant to God was considered key to becoming closer to God. *Tawba*, "repentance" was considered essential to the cleansing of the soul.[57] This need for repentance is especially necessary as Baṣrī recognized the notion that the Heart (even of a sincere believer) is susceptible to fluctuation in terms of its purity.[58]

Ḥārith b. Asad al-Muḥāsibī (d. 243/857) continued from where Ḥasan al-Baṣrī left off on the study and description of the "*'ilm al-qulūb.*" A rigorous adherent to a stance of constant moral/ethical inquiry into the self and the actions of self ("*muḥāsaba*" from whence he gets his *nisbā*), al-Muḥāsibi himself cited the influence of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī on his thought.[59] His theories were based on the *Qur'ān* and centred on the heart (an immaterial entity which controls the conscience) as the essence of the self.[60]

Central to the knowledge needed in order to draw nearer to God was the need for reflection in order to assess one's motives. Only through reflection could one fully assess the "works of the Heart" and thus obtain the knowledge necessary to act rightly. Sin (any action displeasing to God) was considered to place a physical black spot on the heart, making it more difficult to be closer to the Divine. Over time, these black spots could cover the heart entirely.[61] Citing the *Ḥadīth* which refers to the centrality of the

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[57]Ibid., 147.
[58]Ibid., 149. It is interesting to note, and will be discussed more closely later that the very root of the word "*qalb*" means "to fluctuate, turn, change".
[59]Margaret Smith, *An Early Mystic of Baghdad* (London: The Sheldon Press, 1935), 67.
[60]Ibid., 86.
[61]Ibid., 89.

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heart to the soundness of the person[62], Muḥāsibi placed the Heart in a position of similar importance.

> And al-Muḥāsibi writes, "God has laid commands and prohibitions upon each member, which are binding upon it, and He ordained for the heart, after faith and repentance, single-mindedness of action towards God Most High, and fear of His chastisement, and satisfaction with His decrees, and hope in His grace.[63]

It was possible for the Heart to directly receive illumination, *nūr al-qulūb*, from God.[64] Faith also was considered to be centred in the Heart and its faculties.

> ... and Muḥammad b. Khafīf, who regarded al-Muḥāsibī as his master, declared, 'Faith is the belief of the heart in that knowledge which comes from the Unseen, because faith is that which is hidden, and it can be obtained only through Divine strengthening of one's certainty, which is the result of knowledge bestowed by God.[65]

Muḥāsibī's focus on the Heart continues with his definition of asceticism as an "act of the Heart", an action which propels one on the road to the Divine.[66]

Thus, for Muḥāsibī, the Heart was the central organ of religious importance. This included the Heart's function as a centre of reason (*'aql*), and perhaps more importantly, as the centre for special knowledge of the Divine, *ma'rifa* ("gnosis"). This term was defined by him as "... the heart's recognition of its need of God, and its approach unto Him and to the invisible world and the vision thereof."[67] A further function of the heart was considered its function as a protagonist in the struggle between the *nafs* (the earthly, sensual portion of the person which desires this World) and the *qalb* (which

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[62]This *Ḥadīth* was quoted at the beginning of the present work. "There is a piece of flesh in the body if it becomes good (reformed) the whole body is good but if it gets spoiled, the whole body gets spoiled and that is the heart."
[63]Ibid., 88. Quoted from Muḥāsibī's *Kitāb al-Mustarshid*, (MS. Cairo, Taṣ. Sh.3), fol 5.
[64]Ibid., 179.
[65]Ibid., 183. Quoted from Isaac of Nineveh's *Mystic Treatises* (A.J. Wensinck, trans., Amsterdam), 289-90.
[66]Ibid., 105.
[67]Ibid., 224. Quoted from Muḥāsibī's *Ādab al-Nufūs*, (MS. Stambul, Jārallāh), fol. 91b.

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desires the Divine).[68] As will be seen later, this notion is taken up by Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī who further theorizes on the struggle between the *nafs* and *qalb*.[69]

iii. Tirmidhī's Contemporaries

Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Baghawī al-Nūrī was born in Baghdād in probably 226/840 in a Khorāsānī family. He knew Kharrāz and Junayd and was referred to as "Commander of Hearts" by Junayd. Devoted to his Sufi bretheren, he offered his life in place of his friend Ghulām Khalīl when he was tried and sentenced to death. Upon this offer, the Caliph let Khalīl go and acquited the Sufis.[70] Nūrī outraged people with his use of the word "*'ishq*" ("passion", previously only used to describe erotic love) to describe the relation between God and humans. He is said to have died in 295/907, from wounds sustained by running through a reed bed while in a state of ecstasy.

Although cited in various Sufi sources such as the *Kashf al-Maḥjūb*, his actual treatises appear to have been lost until the "discovery" of his *Maqāmāt al-Qulūb* (*Stations of the Heart*) by Paul Nwyia in the mid 1970's.[71] *Maqāmāt al-Qulūb* asserts that God cannot be understood by the rational faculties but can only be reached by relying on the heart to obtain knowledge. The Heart passes through four layers and four "stages" of understanding. These stages correspond exactly to Tirmidhī's layers and stages: *ṣadr* (the level of outward submission- *Islām*), *qalb*, *fu'ād*, and *lubb* (the level of innermost knowledge of *Tawḥīd*). Neither al-Nūrī nor Tirmidhī appear to refer to the other author, so the actual origin of this schema is not easy to discern. Also included in

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[68]Ibid., 89.

[69]It may be noted that the tripartite struggle of *qalb*, *nafs*, and *rūḥ*, which has some basis in the *Qur'ān*, was discussed in the *Tafsīr* attributed to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. (See Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*: 191) For more information on al-Ṣadiq and his *Tafsīr*, see Michael A. Sells, *Early Islamic Mysticism* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1996) 75-89

[70]Annemarie Schimmel, "Al-Nūrī", *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd Ed. vol. 8: 139.

[71]Edited by Nwyia and published as "Textes Mystiques Inedits D'Abū-L-Ḥasan al-Nūrī" in *Melanges De L'Universite Saint Joseph*, Tome XLIV, Fasc. 9; Beirut, 1970.

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this work is the allegory of the heart of the Sufi as the seat of the "King of Certitude" who presides over the lush garden that is the heart of the mystic and is aided by his two viziers, Fear and Hope.[72]

iv. The Life of Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī

Khorāsān has a rich and diverse religious history. On its soil have flourished Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Manicheanism, and later, Islam. [73]Khorāsān in the third and fourth centuries after Hijra was a center for mystical thought.[74] There was a diversity of ascetic and mystical movements which later was included among the Schools of Iraqī Sufism.[75] At this period of history, the main focus of Khorāsānī Sufis was mystical psychology.[76]When Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī was born, (between 205/820 and 215/830 in Tirmidh, in present day Uzbekistan),[77] parts of Persia were still being converted to Islam.[78] At any rate, the time and area he flourished in was one teeming with religious

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[72]Knysh, 2000: 62.

[73]The varied religious milieu of Khorāsān is discussed in the article by A. H. Zarrinkoob entitled "Persian Sufism in Its Historical Perspective" (*Iranian Studies* v.III, no.3&4:139-220). He suggests also that there is some Shamanistic influence from Central Asia in this area which influenced the Mystical ideas which arose here.

[74]The Khorāsānī School of Sufism was founded by Ibrāhīm b. Adham (d. 165/782) and flourished with the indigenous Karāmiyya and Malāmatiyya Schools.
See *The Cambridge History of Iran, v.4* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

[75]Alexander Knysh, *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History* (Leiden, Boston, Koln: Brill, 1999) 99

[76]Sara Sviri, "Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī and the Malāmatī Movement in Early Sufism" in *Classical Persian Sufism: From its Origins to Rūmī*, ed. Leonard Lewisohn (London and New York: Khaniqahi Nimatullahi Publications, 1993), 613.

[77]There is not an absolute consensus as to the exact date of Tirmidhī's birth and death. The earliest he is said to have died is 255, the latest, 320. Radtke and O'Kane's placement of birth between 205 and 215 and death between 295 and 300, appears to cover the greatest consensus of Sufis and later scholars. For more information on this quandary, see Muhammad Khalid Masud's "Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's *Buduww Sha'n*", *Islamic Studies* v.IV, n.3 (1965) 315-343.

[78]Zarrinkoob, 1970:147.

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thought and speculation, as well as a centre for the study of *Ḥadīth* within the Muslim world.[79]

Unlike many Sufis (and other thinkers), there is relatively little mention made of him in outside sources which may be used to build a biographical sketch (other than Hujwīrī's discussion of him in the *Kashf al-Maḥjūb*). However, Tirmidhī's own biography exists, the *Bad' sh'an*.[80] A lively description of his and his wife's mystical endeavors, it provides an insight into the life and perhaps mentality of this Khorāsānī Shaykh. The son of a *Ḥadīth* scholar, Tirmidhī studied the "traditional" Muslim sciences (*Qur'ān, Ḥadīth, Fiqh*) from an early age.[81] At the age of 28, as he reports, he went to make the *Ḥajj*, and his life was transformed. While in Mecca, he had an intense spiritual experience and began, from that point, to memorize the *Qur'ān* and turn away from the phenomenal world.

> The door of supplication was opened for me at the Multazam[82] every night towards dawn. In my heart there occurred true repentance (*tawba*) and the decision to abandon [worldly matters] whether large or small.... And my heart had found the right direction, and I had asked God at the Multazam during those days to make me true and to cause me to renounce the world and to grant that I learn His book by heart.... I began to memorize it while still traveling on the road.[83]

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[79] *Cambridge History of Iran*, 459.

[80] There is some confusion about the title of the work. Radtke and O'Kane transliterate the title as *Bad' sha'n* (which may be translated as *The Beginning of the Matter*) while Heer and Masud translate it as *Buduww Sha'an* (which may be translated as *The Manifestation of the Matter*).

[81] Ḥujwīrī maintains that Tirmidhī studied *fiqh* with a friend of Abū Ḥanīfa. *Kashf al-Maḥjūb*, R. A. Nicholson (trans.) (London: Luzac & Co., 1936), 141.

[82] The "Multazam" is a part of the Ka'aba between the door and the Black Stone where the circumnabulation (*tawāf*) begins.

[83] *Bad' sh'an*, in *The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism: Two Works by Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī*, Bernd Radtke and John O'Kane (trans.), (Richmond Surrey: Curzon Press, 1996), 16.

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When he returned home, he continued his effort to memorize the *Qur'ān* and began to perform ascetic practices. It appears that he had no Sufi master under whom he was tutored although it is maintained that he sought out the Sufis (*ahl al-ma'rifa*) when he returned to Khorāsān and had some interaction with them.[84] Apparently he was influenced by certain Sufi works, most notably a treatise by Anṭakī (which may in fact have been a work by al-Muḥāsibī incorrectly attributed to Anṭakī).[85] Although he does not mention it explicitly, it was later said that Tirmidhī's spiritual guide was Khiḍr, the mystical guide of Moses mentioned in the *Qur'ān.* [86] [87]

Over time, Tirmidhī's fame and influence grew, and a group began to form around him. He was later accused of heresy and sedition and brought to the capital, Balkh, in order to justify himself and his views. Most distressing to the rulers of Balkh, were his teachings about love. It was charged that he "...corrupted the people and was engaged in heretical innovation and claimed to be a prophet."[88] During his trial, two of his books, *Khatm al-Awliyā'* and *'Ilal al-'ubūdiyya* were brought against him.[89] He was able to successfully defend himself and later won the esteem of those who had persecuted him and became a respected religious figure. After returning to Tirmidh, he continued his teaching and writing until his death between 295/905 and 300/910. His tomb still survives in Tirmidh.

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[84]Nicholas Heer, "Some Biographical and Bibliographical Notes on al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, 121.

[85]Ibid, 2.

[86]This is mentioned in 'Aṭṭār's *Tadhkirat al-Awlīyā'* as cited in Zarrinkoob, 196. Hujwīrī also mentions Tirmidhī's tutelage by Khiḍr (p.141).

> "Many remarkable stories are told of him, as for instance that he associated with the Apostle Khiḍr. His disciple, Abū Bakr Warrāq, relates that Khiḍr used to visit him every Sunday, and that they conversed with each other."

[87]For more information on Khiḍr, the origins of the mythology around him, and its development in Islam, see Wensinck's article "Khaḍr" in the *Encyclopedia of Islam.*

[88]*Bad' sha'n,* 20.

[89]Knysh, 106.

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v. The Works of Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī

Possibly the most prolific writer during the Classical Period of Islam,[90] Tirmidhī wrote a vast corpus of books, of which many survive only in fragments. Othman Yahya, in his bibliographic essay on Tirmidhī, lists one hundred and six works by Tirmidhī. This list was compiled through an assessment of works listed by Massignon in his *Essay on the Origins of the Technical Language of Islamic Mysticism*, the listing of manuscripts by Brockelmann, Arberry and 'Abd al-Qādir's list in the preface to their edition of the *Kitab ar-Riyāḍa*[91], as well as a viewing of the actual existing manuscripts by Othman Yahya himself.[92] Nicholas Heer, in his biographical essay, lists seventy-five works, while Masud lists fifty-six.

Among this vast array of treatises are works dealing with psychology, ethics, theology, the rites of Islam, *ḥadīth*, *tafsīr*, and history. [93] Radtke and O'Kane list thirteen of Tirmidhī's most important works (aside from the two works translated). These include:

1. *Nawādir al-uṣūl* was cited frequently in Sufi circles until the 19th century. This work cites various *ḥadīth* and discusses them through the use of *'ilm al-bāṭin* (knowledge of esoteric principles). [ḤT 41; GAS I, 655, nr.9; published in Istanbul]
2. *'Ilal al-sharī'a* discusses the same subject matter as the previously mentioned and was considered controversial enough that it was one of the works cited against him in his trial in Balkh. [ḤT 51 ff.; GAS I, 654, nr.2; unpublished in critical edition]
3. *Kitāb al-Manhiyyāt* centres on a mystical interpreation of *ḥadīth* literature is central to this work (as in the previous two). [ḤT 51; GAS I, 659, nr. 19;published in Beirut, 1986]
4. *Kitāb al-Ṣalāt* is an interpretation of the prescriptions of the ritual prayer. [ḤT 41; GAS I, 655, nr. 11; printed in Cairo, 1965]
5. *Kitāb al-Ḥuqūq* deals with the mutual rights and duties of the government, religious authorities, the Prophet, and others. [ḤT 48; GAS I, 657, nr.33; unpublished]

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[90]Radtke and O'Kane, 2.
[91](Cairo, 1947)
[92]Othman Yahya, "L'oeuvre de Tirmidhī" (Essai Bibliographique), in *Melanges Louis Massignon, Tome III* (Damascus: Institut Francais de Damas, 1957) 411-473.
[93]For the sake of brevity, all of his works will not be listed here. For a full list, see Yahya's article.

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6. *Kitāb al-Amthāl* attempts to describe the mystic experience and path. [ḤT 43; GAS I, 656, nr 20; published in Cairo, 1975]

7. *Kitāb al-Furūq* discusses the workings of the *qalb* and *nafs*. [ḤT 50; GAS I, 655, nr. 10; unpublished in critical edition]

8. *Kitāb al-Akyas wa-l-mughtarrīn* describes right and wrong behavior in the performance of the rituals. It is quoted by Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazzalī in his *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*. [ḤT 47; GAS I, 654, nr. 3; published in Cairo, 1989]

9. *Kitāb Riyāḍat al-nafs* appears to be a central work in Tirmidhī's corpus, which Tirmidhī himself quotes in other of his works. It is a compendium of beliefs and observations about the mystic path. [ḤT 41; GAS I, nr. 4; twice edited, most recently by A. J. Arberry and 'Abd al-Qādir, Cairo, 1947]

10. *Kitāb Adab al-Nafs* is a collection of questions and answers about the Sufi path and the meaning of *yaqīn*. [ḤT 41; GAS I, nr.21; also edited by Arberry and 'Abd al-Qadir, Cairo, 1947]

11. *Manāzil al-qāṣidīn* discusses the stages of the mystical path. [ḤT 48; GAS I, 656, nr. 17; published in Cairo, 1988]

12. *'Ilm al-Awliyā'* deals with a variety of subjects regarding "Friendship". [ḤT 52; GAS I, 658, nr. 43; published in a partial edition]

13. *al-Farq bayna l-āyāt wa-l-karāmāt* is a supplement to the *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*. [ḤT 47; GAS I, 657, nr. 32; unpublished][94]

To this list must be added the *Kitāb Sīrat al-Awliyā'* (also known as *Khatm al-Awliyā'* or *Khatm al-Walāya*), which has been edited by Radtke in *Drei Schriften I*, pp. 1-134 and later translated. Tirmidhī's autobiography, the *Bad' Sha'n*, also has been edited and translated.[95]

The *Bayān al-Farq* is catalogued in Brockelman as nos. 20, 33. Little appears to be known about the date of its origin. (It is not really possible to accurately point to a year any of Tirmidhī's books were written.) Nicholas Heer prepared the edited version of the treatise from the only known existing manuscript in the "Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah" in Cairo, where it is listed as "taṣawwuf 367". This manuscript is apparently problematic as it is carelessly written and contains errors. Despite these flaws, Heer still edited the text and published it in 1958 in Cairo with his corrections and reconstructions.[96]

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[94]Radtke and O'Kane, 2-5.

[95]From my research, it appears that only three works by Tirmidhī have been translated into English, as previously mentioned, *Khatm al-Awliyā'*, *Bad' Sha'n*, and the *Bayān Farq*.

[96]Heer, "A Sufi Psychological Treatise": 27.

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Perhaps due to these errors and the necessity of corrections cited by Heer, Radtke and O'Kane maintain that the *Bayān al-Farq* is not an authentic work by Tirmidhī. However, no explicit reason is given for this statement. Research has yielded no further information on their supposition and in fact, Radtke, in an earlier work, lists the *Bayān al-Farq* among Tirmidhī's works.[97] Othman Yahya lists the *Bayān al-Farq* in his bibliographic essay. Prefaced to the essay, he mentions not only the four ways he compiled his list, but also maintains that he does not include edited works, lost manuscripts, and apocryphal works.[98] The researcher has thus been placed in a position of difficulty. Radtke's opinion is a weighty one, but as no information has been provided by him in the book this statement is mentioned in and there have been no later references to it in his later work, it appears prudent to proceed with the assumption that the *Bayān al-Farq* is indeed actually Tirmidhī's.

vi. The Influence and Thought of Ḥakim al-Tirmidhī

Much myth and confusion surround Tirmidhī and his influences and influence on later scholars. Baldick points out the possibility of Shamanistic influence on Tirmidhī.[99] In addition, his theory of *Wilāya* is possibly heavily influenced by the Shi'ā doctrine of the Imām.[100] Even the appellation "al-Ḥakīm" has some bearing on its origin. This title shows his affiliation with the *Ḥakīmiyya*, group which flourished in Khorāsān at the time of Tirmidhī. Ḥujwīrī considers the Ḥakīmiyya to be the followers of Tirmidhī and claims that they derived their name from him.[101] As the major doctrine of the Ḥakīmiyya was the tenet of *wilāya*, "friendship with God", which is the

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[97]Radtke, *Al-Ḥakīm at-Tirmidhī*: 41-42.
[98]Yahya, 418.
[99]Julian Baldick, *Mystical Islam: An Introduction to Sufism* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1989), 44.
[100]Knysh, 107.
[101]Ḥujwīrī, 210ff.

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concept most strongly associated with Tirmidhī, it makes sense to place the influence of the name with Tirmidhī as its origin.

"Ḥakīm " may refer to Tirmidhī's philosophical tendencies and his influences from Greek thought. Trimingham notes that Tirmidhī was the first to write about the Greek term "*logos*", which Tirmidhī translated as *"dhikr"*.[102] It also appears that his Cosmology has some Platonic and Pythagorean influence.[103] Massignon has translated this term "Ḥakīm" as "philosopher" while Othman Yahya uses the term "sage". [104] Regardless of its origin, the title is an honorific one and the respect he received from later Sufis is amply shown by Ḥujwīrī, who was apparently the first chronicler to use this title for Tirmidhī. [105]

Another Sufi group which Tirmidhī influenced was the *Malāmatiyya*, "the people of the path of blame", a group which originated in Nīshāpūr. Their doctrine centred on their understanding of psychology and the workings of the self . In their thought, it is necessary to be aware of the prodding of the *nafs* and expose it to blame and humiliation in order to quell its influence. Tirmidhī was acquainted with this group as some letters he wrote to their Shaykh Abū 'Uthmān al-Ḥīrī have survived. In the letters, he is critical of their lingering on the *nafs* and its power.[106]

As was previously mentioned, conceivably the most important concept discussed by Tirmidhī is *Wilāya*, Friendship with God. As early as the second century *hijra*, this concept was written on by Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣfahānī in his *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'*. Tirmidhī's contemporary Abū Sa'īd Aḥmad al-Kharrāz (c.899) also wrote a book dealing with this

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[102]J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971) 161.
[103]Knysh, 107.
[104]Hasan Qasim Murad, "Life and Works of Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī", *Hamdard Islamicus*, vol. II, n.1 (1979) 65-77.
[105]Ibid., 66.
[106]Sviri, 583-610.

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concept entitled *Kitāb al-Kashf wa al-Bayān* (which was later elaborated on by Tirmidhī).[107] In his most influential work, *Khatm al-Awliyā'*, the theory of Friendship with God is delineated. According to this book, the *Awliyā'* are the heirs of the Prophet and may obtain a spiritual station and closeness to God equal to (or even higher) than the Prophets (in the case of the *"Khatm al-Awliyā"*). It is this concept of the *Khatm* that is of paramount importance in the influence of Tirmidhī on Muḥyidīn Ibn 'Arabī (d.1240). The questions listed in the *Khatm al-Awliyā'* (which deal with a variety of topics ranging from theology to philosophy) are answered in the *Futūḥāt al-Makiyya* by Ibn 'Arabī. [108]

Tirmidhī also developed a mythology of the beginning of creation and the fall of Adam and Iblīs. This allegory is filled with light symbolism as people are categorized according to the amount of light they received when initially created.[109] Humans are unique as they were created physically by God, whereas the rest of creation began only with God's word "*Kun*"("Be").[110]

Tirmidhī's works also point to a focus of his on the duality of human nature-especially the duality of internal and external. Perhaps the strongest duality present in humans is the duality and tension between *qalb* and *nafs*. *Qalb* is the spiritual centre of the person and classifies objects of awareness and distinguishes between good and ugly. On the other hand, the *nafs* is the "ego", the portion of the human that ties the individual to the phenomenal world and its snares. There is an inherent battle between these forces

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[107]Knysh, 58.

[108]For further information on Tirmidhī's concept of *Wilāya*, see the aforementioned translation of *Khatm al-Awliyā* by Radtke and O'Kane, Radtke's article "The Concept of Wilāya in Early Sufism", in *Classical Persian Sufism: from its Origins to Rumi*, pp. 483-497, and Muḥammad al-Geyoushi's article "Al-Tirmidhī's Theory of Saints and Sainthood".

[109]Knysh, 2000: 108. Al-Ghazzālī also distinguishes between people according to the amount of light apportioned to them in his *Mishkāt al-Anwār*.

[110]Y. Marquet, "Al-Tirmidhī"in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. 10, fasc. 171-172: 544.

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within the individual. It is envisioned as a city in which the heart is the seat, around which are seven cities of light (the soul) and surrounding villages (the internal organs). Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazzalī uses this imagery in his *Kīmiyā' al-sa'āda* (*The Alchemy of Happiness*).[111] Pivotal to his mystical psychology, this concept of the struggle of *qalb* and *nafs* will be discussed further in the next chapter.

III. Maqāmāt al-Qalb

> Since man is "*homo symbolicus*", and all his activities involve symbolism, it follows that all religious facts have a symbolic character.... One could say, then, that all research undertaken on a religious subject implies the study of religious symbolism.[112]

With this perspective in mind, *Qalb* may be interpreted as symbolic. If Eliade's position is taken, the position that a symbol points to revealed aspects of reality, it is a way to approach the Divine. The Heart and its concept as delineated by Tirmidhī and other Sufis seems to be the same. It is the symbol of the meeting place of the Divine and the Believer, the ultimate Sufi symbol of *qurb*, closeness. For, through the Heart and its nature and function the *Qur'ānic* assertion that "God is closer than the jugular vein"[113] may be realized. Thus, the desire for God precipitates an alchemical reaction in which a lump of flesh in the chest turns into a metaphysical entity with eyes and ears to discern the Divine.[114]

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[111]Geyoushi, 1974: 8. The influence of Tirmidhī on Al-Ghāzzalī has not been sufficiently studied. Some scholars have mentioned possible links between the two (such as Arberrry) but no substantial work on the link between the two has been attempted. For a treatment of the subject of the links between both Sufis, see Hava Lazaurus-Yafeh's *Studies in al-Ghazzālī* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1975) pp. 268-277.

[112]Eliade, "Methodological Remarks on the Study of Religious Symbolism", 95.

[113]See Sūrat 50:16.

[114]Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 5.

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'My earth hath not room for Me, neither hath My Heaven, but the Heart of my believing slave hath room for Me.'[115] Another example is to be found in the poem of the Sufi Ḥallāj which begins: 'I saw my Lord with the Eye of the Heart. I said: 'Who art Thou?' He answered: 'Thou'.[116]

The importance of the Heart in Sufi practice and orientation cannot be over emphasized. Martin Lings assigns to the Heart the site of the "isthmus", *barzakh*, mentioned in the *Qur'ān* between two dimensions.[117]

Although *qalb* is one of the *maqāmāt al-qalb*, this term, in general usage refers to the whole Heart. In the *Bayān al-Farq*, Tirmidhī draws the comparison of the usage of the term "Heart/*Qalb*" to the usage of the term "eye", which refers to the entire area "between the two eyelashes" in general, although this term specifically refers to the actual organ. An analogy of this nature is also drawn between the use of the term "*dar*"(home), "*qindīl*" (lamp), and the "*Ḥarām*" in Mecca.[118]

Maqāmāt are the stations or levels of knowledge on the Sufi path. Implicit in this is the notion of a hierarchy of believers which Tirmidhī himself ascribes to. He quotes the *Qur'ānic* passage: " And we have raised some of them above others in rank."[119] Not all believers will reach the most inner level of the Heart, the *Lubb*.[120] It is the Heart which must be cleansed in order to become a receptacle for interaction with the Divine. "It is

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[115]This is a famous *ḥadīth qudsī*.
[116]Lings, 49. The quote cited is from Ḥallāj's *Diwan* (Beirut: Dār al-Jadīd, 1998), 112.
[117]Ibid., 50. This refers to the *ayat* XXV: 53 which describes the place of intersection of two seas, one which has sweet, fresh water (the Spirit) and the other, salt water (the soul and body). *Barzakh* is also used to refer to the intermediate realm between life and the day of resurrection in Muslim eschatology.
[118]*Bayān al-Farq*, 28. All references to and quotations of the *Bayān al-Farq* refer to Heer's translation.
[119]Ibid., 29. *Qur'ān* 63:32.
[120]It is interesting to note that Tirmidhī does not use the term "*sirr*", often defined as the "inner heart secret" in this context of Sufi thought, as the innermost level of the Heart in his schema. Later Sufis (for example, Qushayrī) place the *sirr* at the centre. See Sells, 147.

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this heart which has been interpreted as God's Throne and this alone must be cleansed through *sulūk* or Devotion to God."[121]

In the schema of psychology in the Islamic tradition, there are three elements- *rūḥ* (spirit), *qalb* (heart), and *nafs* (soul).[122] Within the schema of the *Bayān al-Farq*, Tirmidhī emphasizes the struggle between the *qalb* and the *nafs*. As this struggle plays itself out in the first "station" of the Heart, the *ṣadr*, before proceeding to describe that station, a stronger elucidation of the struggle is perhaps necessary.

The *nafs* is the centre or bearer of drives. It originates in the Earth but also has a link to the higher realms. Tirmidhī locates the *nafs* within the stomach.[123] Lusts, passions, pleasures, and the seeking of pleasure must be removed, one must be cleansed of all desires in order to overcome the *nafs* and begin the journey to the *lubb*. In a sense, the *nafs* craves multiplicity, as it sees and grasps at the apparent innumerable glamors of the world. In contrast, the *qalb* desires unity and, if given the opportunity, may see and

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[121]Mir Valiuddin, "Cleaning the Heart: The Sufi Approach" in Mohamed Taher (ed.), *Sufism: Evolution and Practice* (New Delhi: Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd., 1997).

[122]Mohammad Ajmal, "Sufi Science of the Soul", in Seyyed Hossein Nasr (ed.), *Islamic Spirituality: Foundations* (New York: Crossroads Publishing, 1997) 295. He goes on to further distinguish between four types of *nufūs*.

> "A distinction must be made among the following: (1) *al-nafs al-ḥayawāniyyah*- the animal soul, the soul as passively obedient to natural impulsions; (2) *al-nafs al-ammārah*- "the soul which commands," the passionate, egoistic soul; (3) *al-nafs al-lawwāmah*- "the soul which blames," the soul aware of its own imperfections; and (4) *al-nafs al-muṭma'innah*- "the soul at peace", the soul reintegrated in the Spirit and at rest in certainty. The last three expressions are from the *Qur'ān*.

[123]In Iranian pre-Islamic thought, there were three macrocosmic levels- heaven, earth and hell, which exist in three microcosmic levels- the head, the heart, and the belly or rectum. According to Radtke, in his "Iranian and Gnostic Elements in Early Taṣawwuf: Observations Concerning the *Umm al-Kitāb*", Gherardo Gnoli and Antonio Panaino (eds.), *Proceedings of the First European Conference of Iranian Studies, vol. 2* (Rome: Instituto Italiano Per Il Medio Ed Estremo Oriente: 1990), Tirmidhī's concept of the body corresponds to this ancient conception. The head is the centre of reason (*'aql*), the belly the centre of the base human instincts (*nafs*), and the heart the centre of the possibility for communion with the Divine. "In the heart is contained an elixir of the Divine lightsphere." (Ibid., 522)

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experience the essential unity of Creation. To begin the journey to the Center, and to discipline the *nafs*, observance of the religious law is necessary. Quelling the *nafs* is extremely difficult, because to kill the carnal soul is to experience a type of suicide, letting go of a major part of the self and the self conception (this is where ego comes in as a barrier to spiritual development). Once the body begins to be disciplined, the passions or desires of this world arise. Especially dangerous is the pleasure of religious practice (which must also be overcome, as it is a desire). To truly conquer the self, help is needed from God. Once given, this gift puts one in a state of *yaqīn*, true and certain knowledge of God. "When the *nafs* has reached the ultimate degree of perfection, it passes on to the level of the heart."[124]

If, however, one continues to desire and focus on the world and its snares, each act of disobedience, each act which keeps one from breaking with the *nafs*, creates a black spot on the heart. Over time, and with continuous additions, the heart may become blackened and unable to move in even the slightest direction toward the Divine. "Al-Tirmidhī repeatedly warns believers against falling victim to their appetites, which tend to accumulate in the breast, like soot or dust."[125]

The physical Heart is aligned with the Spiritual centre for several reasons. As belies its root in Arabic-*qalaba*, the Heart is constantly fluctuating, oscillating, moving. It mediates between the clean and the unclean and is a centre of purification. With its function as the muscle which pumps blood, it is the Centre of Life in the human. Other parts of the body may have problems, but if the heart fails, there is no hope for the survival of the human being. Its central location in the body also points to the central importance of the Spiritual Heart.

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[124]Dr. Javad Nurbakhsh, *The Psychology of Sufism (Del wa Nafs)*, (London and New York: Khaniqahi-Nimatullahi Publications, 1992) 71.
[125]Knysh, 110.

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> Just as the physical heart maintains the continued functioning of the body through its perpetual and spontaneous action, the spiritual heart automatically regulates the temperament and psychological actions. The physical heart governs the physical body, while the spiritual heart governs the psyche. [126]

While the *Bayān al-Farq* presents a clarification of four levels of the Heart, apparently Tirmidhī is not consistent in his works on the number and order of the *maqāmat al-qalb.* "He presents different pictures of the heart, divided into three, four, and seven organs. The heart is the king and the intellect its chief minister."[127] In the *Bayān al-Farq,* Tirmidhī mentions the "ineffable stations", the layers of the heart which lie beyond those mentioned in the book and can only be known by those who reach an intense level of nearness to the Divine (with, of course, the help of the Divine).[128]

i. The First Station-The Ṣadr

The Arabic root *ṣ-d-r* most commonly refers to the first and foremost of something, the part of a thing which one faces is the *ṣadr* of that thing[129]. It is the front most part of something, the place from whence something comes. Lane, in his *Lexicon* of the Arabic language, states that, as *ṣadr* is the front of something, it is hence allied with the breast or bosom of a human, and often means mind.[130] This usage of *ṣadr* to mean the physical breast or chest is perhaps the most common usage of the term. As Ibn Manẓūr points out, when the *Qur'ān* says, "...the hearts in the breast", it is used for emphasis, for there is no other place for the heart to be located but the breast.[131] Hence, the expression "*raḥīb al-ṣadr*", ample/dilated in the breast/bosom (to mean liberal, free

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[126]Nurbaksh, 76.
[127]Baldick, 44.
[128]*Bayān al-Farq*, 32.
[129]Ibn Manẓūr, vol. 2, 416.
[130]Lane, vol. 2, 1661.
[131]Ibn Manẓūr, vol. 2, 416.

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thinking) and "*ḍayyiqu al-ṣadr*", (having the mind/breast straight or contracted).[132] There also exists the expression "*dhāt al-sudūr*", which Lane translates as "what is in the minds."[133] A garment which covers the breast and shoulders may also be called *ṣidār*, from the same root. *Muṣaddar* refers to a man strong in the chest, one who is courageous. *Maṣdūr* refers to a man with a problem or complaint (i.e., a complaint of the chest).

The advent of something can also be called the *ṣadr* of something, its beginning or first part, such as the title of a book or writing or its first part. On a similar vein, the highest official in a government, such as a prime minister who reports to the King, may be called "*ṣadr al-ṣudūr*".[134] There is also an expression "*ṣadr al-qawl*", the saying issued or emanated.

Ṣadr can also be used to refer to the highest or optimal point of something, such as the ball of the foot ("*ṣadr al-qadm*"), the tip of an arrow ("*ṣadr al-sahm*"), and the highest point in an oasis ("*ṣudūr al-wādī*"). "After entering the house, one finds the high seat, *ṣadr*, or the throne,...."[135] To honor someone, that person is placed on the *ṣadr*.

Another meaning from this root may be the sense of something returning or going back (*muṣādarat*). The verbs *aṣdar* and *ṣaddara* connote causation, as in "he caused something or someone to return. Along the concept of "returning" is the word *al-ṣadar*, which is associated with the *Ḥajj*. "The fourth day of the sacrifice [performed by the pilgrims]: so called because the people then return from Mekkeh to their abodes."[136] Likewise, the expression "*ṭawāf al-ṣadr*", referring to the circumnabulation around the

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[132]Lane, vol. 2, 1661.
[133]Ibid.
[134]Ibid. It may be noted that in the Ottoman court, *Sadrazam* (from the Arabic *ṣadr al-a'ẓam*) was one of the highest positions in the government.
[135]Schimmel, 1994: 51.
[136]Lane, vol. 2, 1661. (Note: parenthesis are found in the original)

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Ka'aba upon the return from Mount 'Arafāt during the *Ḥajj*. *Maṣdar* is a grammatical term referring to the root origin of a word from which the verbs are derived.

Ṣadr occurs in the *Qur'ān* some forty-four times in its singular and plural forms. Of these forty-four uses of *ṣadr/ṣudūr*, almost one third of the times it is used, it is in the phrase "*dhāt al-sudūr*". *Dhāt* means essence, nature, being.[137] This phrase then may be translated as the "essence of the *ṣudūr* (breasts)". Within the context of the *Qur'ān*, this phrase is connected with God's knowledge of what is contained within the *ṣudūr* of people whether they present what is truly there or they attempt to hide it. In *Sūrat Āl Imrān*, there is description of the loss by the Muslims in the Battle of Uḥud. Booty was not obtained, and some were beginning to lose faith in the Message and the Messenger. This, however, was part of the Divine plan to test those present. "And purge what is in your hearts (*qulūbikūm*). For God knoweth well the secrets (*dhāt*) of your hearts (*al-ṣudūr*)."[138] In *Sūrat Luqmān*, believers are told not to grieve for those who turn from faith, as God is aware of all their deeds. "For God knows well all that is in (men's)[139] hearts (*al-ṣudūr*)[140]." Omniscience is again emphasized in *Sūrat Fāṭir*. "Verily God knows (all) the hidden things (*ghayb*) of the heavens and the earth: Verily He has full knowledge of all that is in (men's) hearts (*al-ṣudūr*)."[141] "He merges Night into Day, and He merges Day into Night; And He has full knowledge of the secrets of (all) hearts (*al-sudūr*)."[142]

Although perhaps the equivalent phrasing is not used, other references are made to God's knowledge of what is in the *ṣadr*, whether one reveals it or not. "And verily thy

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[137]J. Milton Cowan (ed.), *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, Ithaca, New York: Spoken Language Press, 1976.
[138]*Qur'ān* 3:119.
[139]Brackets are included in the translation.
[140]*Qur'ān* 31:23.
[141]Ibid., 35:38.
[142]Ibid., 57:6.

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Lord knoweth all that their hearts do hide, as well as all that they reveal ("*mā tukinna ṣudūruhum wa mā yu'alinūna*")."[143] Some people may attempt to hide from God what is truly within themselves. Thus, *Sūrat Hūd* speaks of some people in this manner: "Behold! they fold up (*yathnūna*) their hearts, that they may lie hid from Him."[144] God knows all of the tricks which people may use to deceive the eyes and He knows what is hidden or concealed in the *ṣudūr* (40:19).[145]

Ṣadr seems to have been used in the *Qur'ān* in reference to beings other than humans. *Sūrat 'Ankabūt* refers to God's knowledge of all things by asking the rhetorical question: "Does not God know best all that is in the hearts of all Creation (*ṣudūr al-'alamīn*)?"[146]

Sūrat al-Nass is a *sūrat* well known and often quoted by Muslims. In it, refuge is sought in God from those who whisper (*yuwaswisu*) evil or hurtful things into the *ṣudūr* of humans.[147] This whispering may come from the promptings of the *nafs* or from the temptings of one of the *shayaṭīn*, which try to incite fear, strife, and forgetfulness in human.

The ability to expand and contract is attributed to the *ṣadr* in the *Qur'ān*. Expansion and contraction of the *ṣadr* is associated with the ability to accept faith or Islam and expand the breast, or to deny it and experience contraction. The *Qur'ān* thus directly allies Islam with the *ṣadr*. *Sūrat Inshirāḥ* begins with the question: "Have We not expanded (*nashraḥ*) thee thy breast (*ṣadraka*)."[148] God appears to choose to lead some to faith and lead others away from it.

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[143]Ibid., 27:74.
[144]Ibid., 11:5.
[145]Ibid., 40:19.
[146]Ibid., 29:10.
[147]Ibid., 114:5.
[148]Ibid., 94:1. The Hans Wehr Dictionary defines *sharaḥa* as "to cut open, rip open, make clearly or discernable, or to explain/elucidate."

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Those whom God (in His Plan)
Willeth to guide, --He openeth (*yashraḥ*)
Their breast to Islam;
Those whom He willeth
To leave straying,--He maketh
Their breast close and constricted (*yaj'al ṣadrahu ẓayyiqan ḥurjan*)
As if they had to climb
Up to the skies: thus
Doth God (heap) the penalty
On those who refuse to believe."[149]

It appears that it is possible for people to also choose belief or unbelief (the seemingly contradictory *Qur'anic* verses have made for much debate among Muslim theologians and philosophers). Some had become Muslims at the time of the revelation of the *Qur'ān* and then became apostates, "...but such as open their breast to Unbelief (*sharaḥa bi al-kufri ṣadran*), On them is Wrath from God,...."[150] To the contrary, for those possessing knowledge, the Truth will be self-evident in their *ṣudūr* (29:49). The Prophet Moses entreats God to expand his *ṣadr*.[151]

As a mercy from God, He may also heal the pain inflicted upon the *ṣudūr* of the believers. Healing is part of the reward in this life (and Paradise in the Hereafter) to those who believe and perform good deeds. "And We shall remove from their hearts (*ṣudūrihim*) any lurking sense of injury."[152] If they show courage and continue to fight on, God will bring victory and "...heal (*yashfī*) the breasts (*ṣudūr*) of the Believers."[153] God may also heal the diseases of the *ṣudūr* in order to aid the expansion of faith.[154] To those who deny the message, God sends terror into their *ṣudūr* when they fight.[155]

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[149] *Qur'ān* 6:125
[150] Ibid., 16:06.
[151] "*Qāla Rabbī ishraḥ lī ṣadrī* (20:25)." He goes on to ask God to remove the obstacles before him and help him to speak well and convince those he was sent to persuade.
[152] *Qur'ān* 7:43.
[153] Ibid., 9:14.
[154] Ibid., 10:57.
[155] Ibid., 59:13.

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For those who dispute God and His signs, their *ṣudūr* are empty of anything positive and contain only conceit (*kibr*).[156] As the heart (*qalb*) is contained within the *ṣadr*, the following is said: "Truly it is not their eyes that are blind, but their hearts which are in their breasts."[157]

Desires and wishes are also centred in the *ṣadr*. For example, cattle have many uses or benefits such as food, transportation, clothing. Their usefulness is a gift from God "...That ye may through them attain to any need (*ḥājatan*) (there may be) in your hearts (*ṣudūrikūm*)."[158] Jealousy seems to be centred here as well. It is related that the people of Medina who had shared their possessions with the *Muhājirīn* after the movement from Mecca to Medina did not covet what was given to the new inhabitants of Medina but rather were generous to them. "And (they)[159] entertain no desire in their hearts (*ṣudūrihim*) for things given to the (latter), but give them preference over themselves."[160]

To some, the message may appear to include a responsibility far too heavy for one to carry. As a comfort, people are told: "So let thy heart (*ṣadruka*) be oppressed (*ḥarajun*) no more by any difficulty on that account,...."[161]

Within the confines of Tirmidhī's map of the heart, the *ṣadr* occupies the outer aspect (*ẓāhir*) of the comprehensive term *qalb*. To use his analogy, it is the white of the eye, the courtyard of the homestead, and the area that surrounds Mecca.[162] "The breast (*ṣadr*)[163] also is to the heart what the shell is to the pearl." *Ṣadr* is the place of

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[156]Ibid., 40:56.
[157]Ibid., 22:46.
[158]Ibid., 40:80
[159]The "they" refers to the people of Medina, the *Anṣār*.
[160]*Qur'an* 59:9.
[161]Ibid., 7:2.
[162]*Bayān al-Farq*, 29.
[163]Ibid., 36. Heer does not include the term *ṣadr* in his translation but it has been added in order to keep clear what term he is using. As mentioned previously, it is preferable to keep the Arabic terms to prevent confusion as in English, these four Arabic terms may

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intersection between the outer and inner world. According to Al-Geyoushi, it is termed *ṣadr* because it is the front of the *qalb* and is the first area or station (*maqām*) in the *maqāmāt al-qalb.*[164]

According to Tirmidhī, the *ṣadr* is the place of the struggle between the desires and wishes of the *nafs* and the desire for purity of the *qalb.* Temptations to evil and rancor attempt to enter the inner self of the person through this portal. "The believer is tested by means of the self and its passions, for the self has been granted authority to enter into the breast."[165] In the *Qur'ān,* there are four levels of souls, the sensual soul, the inspired soul, the self-criticizing soul, and the tranquil soul, each of which correspond to one of the *maqāmāt* in Tirmidhī's blueprint. The sensual Soul is allied with the *ṣadr* and is referred to in Arabic as *al-nafs al-ammārah bi al-sū'*.[166] If the *qalb* is strong, as would be the *qalb* of a believer, it can overcome the whisperings of the lower self. However, if it has not been strengthened by faith, it can be overwhelmed by the promptings of the *nafs* and thus remain divorced from the Divine. Tirmidhī has an interesting description of how the evil whisperings of the *nafs* may enter the *ṣadr.*

> The abode of the self is in the hollow of the stomach and the belly. It becomes excited by the blood and the power of impurity (*najāsah*), and the stomach thus becomes filled with the darkness of its smoke and the heat of its fire. The self thereupon enters into the breast with its evil whisperings and base desires by way of a testing by God of His servant, so that he seeks help from his Lord with true poverty and lasting humility, and God answers him and delivers him from the evil of the self.[167]

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all be translated as "heart".

[164]Al-Geyoushi, 1972:169.

[165]*Bayān al-Farq,* 32.

[166]Al-Geyoushi, 1972: 184. Al-Geyoushi translates *nafs* as soul, which is the usual translation of this term. Tirmidhī discusses four types of *nufūs.* This basest *nafs* is the *nafs al-ammarah,* which Heer translates as "the self which exhorts to evil" (*Bayān al-Farq,* 27). The use of this term is found in the *Qur'ān* 12:53.

[167]*Bayān al-Farq,* 32.

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By allowing the buffer zone that is the *ṣadr* to exist, God has shown mercy to humans. Here is where the testing of God occurs, and the place where one can begin to seek God's help and strength in order to overcome the *nafs* and its (and the Devil's) whisperings. Tirmidhī quotes the *Qur'ān* and the verses which deal with testing what is in the *ṣadr* and also the verse which asks for God's refuge from evil whisperings in order to prove his point.[168]

Tirmidhī often includes strong light and dark symbolism in his work. This is evident in the *Bayān al-Farq* also. Each *maqām* is associated with a type or degree of light. A distinction is made between the *ṣadr* of a believer and a unbeliever or hypocrite. The *ṣadr* of a believer is called by Tirmidhī the "*makān nūr al-islām fīhi*", "the abode of the light of Islām". This is related to one attribute of the *ṣadr*- its ability to expand and contract. Expansion and contraction is a characteristic of the *ṣadr*, not the *qalb*. There is no limit to the amount of expansion and contraction which is possible. Thus, within the *ṣadr* of a believer, the light of Islam may expand to the extent that all traces of the darkness of unbelief and doubt are completely pushed from the *ṣadr*. On the other hand, the *ṣadr* of an unbeliever (*kāfir*) or hypocrite (*munāfiq*) may become so expanded with the darkness of unbelief that it is completely devoid of any light flowing from belief.

Due to the presence of the *nafs* and its desires and influence, the *ṣadr* is a place of possible rancor within the individual. However, for the believer, there is no trepidation within the *ṣadr* because God has put faith within it to such an extent that there is no room for anything else but tranquility.[169] Thus, the difference between the *ṣadr* of a believer and an unbeliever is that an unbeliever continues to suffer from the whisperings of Satan as well as from those of the *nafs*. In addition, it suffers from sorrow and calamity. Within the *ṣadr* of a believer, these whisperings are not heard. However, for

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[168]Ibid., 32. The verses from the *Qur'an* are 3:154, "That God might test what is in your breasts", and 114:5, "(the same) who whispers into the hearts of Mankind."
[169]*Bayān al-Farq*, 35.

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one whose *ṣadr* has been expanded to the light of Islam, one may suffer when hearing of something evil or impure. According to Tirmidhī, this is the case with the Prophets. Their *ṣudūr* are so expanded to Islam that they feel pain in their *ṣudūr* when *shirk* (attributing partnership to God) is uttered. The Prophets did not, however, suffer from the whisperings of Shayṭān[170] nor their own *nufūs*.[171]

As was previously mentioned, the *ṣadr* is the abode (*ma'din*) of Islam, and one at this level of the mystic journey is called a *Muslim*. Tirmidhī notes that *Islam* is a comprehensive term which includes faith and works. There is also an outer and an inner aspect to Islam. In this sense, *Islam* is used more specifically by Tirmidhī to mean the *ẓāhir*, the external, ritual practices and the *ṣadr* is the place where knowledge (*'ilm*) of the religious duties resides. At this level, the type of knowledge present here is the knowledge which can be attained through study, effort, and concentration. This type of knowledge enters the *ṣadr* and can leave there also. The *ṣadr* is like a passage of the

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[170]Tirmidhī uses the term *Shayṭān* which, although it may be considered a proper name of the being equivalent to the Biblical Satan, may be considered a generic term referring to evil or rebellious spirits (*jinn*)which in pre-Islamic lore were considered highly intelligent and were thought to inspire poets. *Shayṭān* and its plural *shāyaṭīn* are used in the *Qur'ān* on numerous occasions and the definite, *al-Shayṭān* is considered an equivalent for *Iblīs* (which is a proper name, not used in a generic sense or in a plural form). (For more information, see the article on *Shayṭān* in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. 9: 406-409.) Tirmidhī's assertion that the Prophets did no suffer from the whisperings of *Shayṭan* appears to contradict the *Qur'ān* and its statement that *al-Shayṭān* did interfere with the Prophets by playing on their desires (22:52). This discussion becomes important later especially in the controversy over the so called "Satanic Verses", verses which some later asserted that the Prophet composed in order to aid the conversion of his contemporaries by any means possible (53:19-20, which refer to the goddesses *Lāt*, *'Uzzā*, and *Manāt*). For further discussion of this controversy and the later consensus (*ijmā'*) see Muḥammad 'Alī Shawkanī's *Fatḥ al-Qadīr* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1992), vol.3, p. 661.

[171]*Bayān al-Farq*, 33. This view of the Prophets, especially the Prophet Muḥammad, being immune to the whisperings of Iblīs ties into Tirmidhī's view of the sinlessness of the Prophet Muḥammad. For more on this idea and the Prophet's status as the "Seal (*khatm*) of the Prophets", see Tirmidhī's *Khatm al-Awliyā'*.

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entering and exiting of the type of knowledge which can be acquired and then forgotten. Forgetting is due to the influence of the *nafs*.

> This type of knowledge (i.e. knowledge of *sharī'ah, ḥadīth*) does not become firmly established in the breast except after much repetition, concentration and perseverance, for the breast is like a passage, especially for that knowledge which is acquired by hearing and which enters it from outside. As so that which enters [the breast] from inside the heart, such as the subtleties of wisdom (*laṭā'if al-ḥikmah*) and indications of grace (*shawāhid al-minnah*),it is firmly established in the breast, because it is the place for distractions and desires. The breast is like a courtyard of the house (*bayt*) within the home (*dār*). Servants, neighbors,strangers, and others sometimes enter the home,but no one enters the master's house except for blood kindred,relatives,or close friends.[172]

There is, thus, a sort of communication and a connection between the *ṣadr* and the *qalb* other than the fact that the *qalb* is physically located within the *ṣadr*. What is included in the *qalb* is manifested in the exterior of the individual through the exit point of the *ṣadr*. To use Tirmidhī's imagery, the breast is a spring which emanates from the *qalb*. Or, to use another analogy, the *qalb* is the root and the *ṣadr* the tree and its branches which are visible to the naked eye.[173]

Along with the light symbolism mentioned before, Tirmidhī also uses mountain imagery to enforce his internal mapping. He rationalizes his use of mountain imagery to describe the lights associated with each level by saying that the mountain is a fitting analogy to describe something which is so firmly rooted that none can truly destroy it but God. As one progresses, the light which is assigned to each level (*maqām*) is more firmly rooted into a Mountain of Light. "Submission is a mountain and the ground on which it stands is the Breast;...."[174] At each level, the mountain is characterized by a different aspect, and is rooted in a different part of the Heart. This is based on a *Ḥadīth*

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[172]Ibid., 83.
[173]Ibid., 30.
[174]Geyoushi, 1972:184.

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of the Prophet: "Faith in their hearts is like the firmly anchored mountains."[175] On top of each mountain peak, there is a bird which symbolizes one of the four grades of the soul residing; "the bird of the Mountain of the Breast is the sensual soul."[176] This bird passes through the valleys of polytheism, skepticism, and hypocrisy. It may stop at any of these and may be dissuaded from doing so by the effort of the individual to increase his or her submission and focus on the journey further inward. Of course, there is the possibility to remain frozen in these dubious valleys.

ii. The Second Station-The Qalb

Qalb is based on the three consonant root *q-l-b*, which in its verb form means to change or alter. Ibn Manẓūr begins his exposition of the root *q-l-b* by saying that it is the transformation of a thing from its appearance .[177] *Qalaba*, the form I verb, means to alter or change. For example, "*qalaba kalāman*": "*He altered* or *changed the order of words of a sentence* or *the like, by inversion*, or *by any transposition.*"[178] Lane also cites the saying "*Qalaba Allāh fulānan ilayhi*", "*God translated such a one unto Himself, by death; meaning God took his soul;....*"[179]

In the Form II of the verb, the action is intensified, thus *qallaba* means to invert or turn upside down. "*Qallabtuhu biyadā*"- "*I turned it over and over with my hand.*"[180] Also, "*qallaba al-fikkara fī umrin*", "*He investigated*, or *revolved repeatedly, in his mind, thoughts, considerations*, or *ideas, with a view to the attainment of some object, in relation to an affair.*"[181] To further strengthen the notion that this form of the verb has within its meaning "to consider", Lane cites the phrase from the *Qur'ān* "wa qallabū laka

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[175]Ibid., 185.
[176]Ibid., 184.
[177]Ibn Manẓūr, vol. 3, 144.
[178]Lane, vol. 2, 2553. It should be noted that the italics occur in the original.
[179]Ibid.
[180]Ibid.
[181]Ibid.

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al-umūr", "*...they turned over and over in their minds affairs, meditating what they should do to thee....*"[182] The *Lisān al-'Arab* also cites the usage of the word *taqallubun* to mean "someone who acts in whatever way he pleases."[183] Derived from this notion of turning over and over, changing, mulling things over is a related concept inherent in the verbal noun of this Form II verb. Thus, *taqlīb* may mean repenting or grieving as evidenced by the expression "*taqleebu al-kaffayni*", which Lane defines as "...an action of him who is repenting or grieving; and therefore metonymically denotes repentance, or grief...."[184]

Alteration or change is also implied in Form VII. "*Al-inqilāb ilā Allāh*": "*The transition,* and the *being translated,* or *removed, to God, by death*....."[185] There is also the *Qur'ānic* saying: "*Wa in aṣābathu fitnatun inqala 'alā wajhihi*". This may be translated as "*...if trial befalls him,* and [particularly such as] disease in himself and his cattle, *he returns* [*to his former way,* i.e., in this case,] *to infidelity.*"[186]

Other forms of this root also imply versatility. *Qalūb* may be used to describe a man who is proficient in a number of tasks or who has broad knowledge base. This same meaning is also implied in the phrase "*rijālun qullabun.*"[187]

Both Ibn Manẓūr and Lane list *fu'ād* as a synonym for heart. These two terms appear to be intrinsically tied, in Arabic poetry and even in more modern usage. "Ibn Sayyidihi said: the *qalb* is the *fu'ād.*"[188] For some grammarians, *qalb* is more specific while for others, *fu'ād* refers to the covering of the *qalb.*

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[182]Ibid., *Qur'ān* 9:48.
[183]Ibn Manẓūr, vol. 3, 144.
[184]Lane, vol. 2, 2553.
[185]Ibid.
[186]Ibid. *Qur'ān* 22:11. (Translation of the *Qur'ān* is Lane's, not Yūsif 'Alī.)
[187]Ibid.
[188]Ibn Manẓūr, vol. 3, 145.

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> Az says, I have observed that some of the Arabs call the whole flesh of the *qalb*, its fat, and its *ḥijāb* [or septum?], *qalb* and *fu'ād*, and I have not observed them to distinguish between the two [words]; but I do not deny that the [word] *qalb* may be [applied by some to] the *black clot of blood in its interior*.....[189]

A saying of the Prophet is cited by Ibn Manẓūr to demonstrate the difference between the two terms. According to the *Ḥadīth*, the Prophet was describing the people of Yemen: "...they are more gentle (*araq quluban*) and more tender hearted (*aylan quluban*)."[190] Implied in the *Ḥadīth* is the description of the *qalb* as gentle and amiable and the *fu'ād* as tender. Lane also mentions that *qalb* can also be used to refer to the stomach.[191]

Qalb is considered so named due to the root of the word, in its verb form referring to altering, changing, oscillating. Ibn Manẓūr quotes: "What is the name of the *qalb* except from (if not from) *taqallubuhu* (that which oscillates)?[192] It is said in Islamic tradition that the *qalb* lies between the fingers of God (and that He may change the Heart as He wills). From this notion comes the famous *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet: "*Subḥān Muqallib al-Qulūb*". In this *Ḥadīth*, Muḥammad calls on the Divine by saying "Glory to the Turner of Hearts".[193]

Qalb may also be applied to the best, purest, or choicest part of something. Thus, the Prophet is reported to have said that the *qalb* of the *Qur'ān* is *Sūrat YāSīn*.[194] A person who is of pure lineage and a model member of his or her tribe may be referred to as *qalb*.

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[189]Lane, vol. 2, 2553.
[190]Ibn Manẓūr, vol. 3, 145.
[191]Lane, vol.2, 2553.
[192]Ibn Manẓūr, vol. 3, 145. Translation from the Arabic is mine.
[193]Ibid., vol.3, 145. This *Ḥadīth* quoted by Ibn Manẓūr.
[194]Lane, vol.2, 2554. The full *Ḥadīth* is quoted as: "*Verily to everything there is a choice, or best part; and the choice of best, part of the Qur'ān is Yā Sīn.*"

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Thus, the expression "*'arabiyyun qalbun*", "a genuine Arabian man" and the feminine, "*imra'tun qalbun*", "a woman pure in regard to her genealogy."[195]

Related to the notion of *qalb* as being the core or centre of something is its usage in the context of the core of a palm, the white heart of the tree which is called the *qalb*. In this context, *qalb* may be regarded as a synonym for *lubb* (pith, core, kernel). This part of the palm is described by Lane as "...a *soft, white substance, that is eaten; it is in the midst of its uppermost part, and of a pleasant or sweet taste.*"[196] Along this same line of description, *qulbun* may be used to describe the branches of the palm tree which grow from the centre or pith of the tree- the *qalb*.[197]

Citing quotations from the *Qur'ān*, both the *Lisān al 'Arab* and Lane's *Lexicon* state that the term *qalb* can also be used to refer to understanding and considering- in this context, a term synonymous with mind and soul. Lane cites *Sūrat Qāf*, verse 36: "Verily in this is a Message for any that has a heart and understanding. Or, who gives ear and earnestly witnesses (the truth)."[198] Ibn Manẓūr quotes Al-Fara', who is purported to have said, regarding the use of *qalb* in the Arabic language: "You do not have a *qalb*..., or your qalb is not with you... to mean that your intellect, intelligence is not with you."[199] A further quotation more closely gives *qalb* a equal footing with *'aql* (most often translated as intellect, reasoning). "*Dhahaba qalbuka? Ayyu ayna dhahaba 'aqluka?*" ("Did your *qalb* leave (you)? Or where is your *'aql*?")[200]

Qalb is an important and relatively oft used word in the *Qur'ān*. *Qalb* and its plural *qulūb* occur one hundred and thirty-two times in the *Qur'ān*. Although the influence of

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[195]Lane, vol. 2, 2554.
[196]Ibid.
[197]Ibid.
[198]Lane
[199]Ibn Manẓūr, vol. 3, 145.
[200]Ibid. Translation of the quote is mine.

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God and His Omnipresence is evident in all things, and in all aspects of life, it is in the *qalb* that He appears to have the most direct influence on humans.

This communication between God and the *qulūb* of humans is discussed by Toshihiko Izutsu in his book *God and Man in the Koran.*[201] In the book he discusses the relationship between God and man as described in the *Qur'ān* including various modes of communication between the two. The *Qur'ān* itself is a linguistic form of communication while the main form of non-linguistic communication (to use Izutsu's terminology) between God and humans is the *āyāt* or signs sent by God for humans to ponder and take as proof of the existence and power of the Divine.

> The *āyāt* begin to show their positive effect only when man shows on his part a deep understanding. Here begins the human side of the matter. And this very important human activity is expressed by a number of verbs which designate various aspects of "understanding". According to the Koran, this human act of understanding has its source in the psychological capacity called *lubb* or *qalb* the "heart".... The "heart is the very thing which enables man to "understand" the meaning of the Divine *āyāt*. So, when this principle is sealed and covered and does not function properly man cannot show any understanding at all.[202]

One *āyah* which in particular directly allies the *qalb* with knowing or understanding (or rather refusing to know or understand) is found in *Sūrat al-Naḥl*, "The Bee." This *āyat* describes the people who deny God's unity and reject the existence of the Hereafter by saying "*qulūbuhum munkiratun wa hum mustakbirūna*"- "...their hearts refuse to know and they are arrogant."[203] In a similar vein is the statement found in *Sūrat Qāf* that the Message sent is truly to any that has a *qalb.*[204]

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[201]Izutsu, 1964.
[202]Ibid., 137.
[203]*Qur'ān* 16:22.
[204]Ibid., 50:37.

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Some *āyāt* in the *Qur'ān* indicate that within this concept of the human, *qalb* is considered one of the sense faculties allied with hearing and/or seeing.[205] Implications are made that the *qalb* can see. Narration is made of people who do not understand the world around them as part of the Divine Proof. Their hearts thus do not know (their hearts do not learn wisdom through traveling and seeing the consequences of various peoples refusing to recognize the Signs).[206] "Truly it is not their eyes that are blind, but their Hearts which are in their breasts."[207]

Sūrat A'rāf contains within it an *āyah* which clearly lists *qalb* as one of the senses:

> Many are the Jinns and men
> We have made for Hell:
> They have hearts wherewith they
> Understand not, eyes wherewith
> They see not, and ears wherewith
> They hear not. They are
> Like cattle,- nay more
> Misguided; for they
> Are heedless (of warning).[208]

As a punishment for denial of the Signs, God is said to put coverings on the hearts of people so that they are unable to understand. Thus, when the *Qur'ān* is recited, a veil is put in front of people who do not believe. "And We put coverings over their hearts (and minds) lest they should understand the *Qur'ān* and deafness into their ears...."[209] In

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[205]Rosenthal, in his *Knowledge Triumphant: The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970) asserts that the *Qur'ān* refers to human knowledge being obtained by three organs in the body- the eye, the ear, and the heart (*qalb*).

[206]Ibid., 22:46. The verb *'aqilūna* is used here.

[207]Ibid. In his book *The Structure of Ethical Terms in the Koran*, Izutsu comments on this *āyah* by saying the following (Izutsu, 1959:124):

> This means that, physically, the *kafirs* are defectless: they have hearts to understand with, ears to hear, and eyes to see with; it is their hearts "that are within their bosoms" that are defective.

[208]Ibid., 7:179

[209]Ibid., 17:46. Yusif 'Alī adds the parenthetical addition "and minds" to clarify the meaning. This, however, is his addition and does not occur in the original Arabic.

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addition, *Sūrat al-Kahf* includes a similar expression as the previously mentioned. Veils (*akinnatan*) are placed over the Hearts and ears of those who turn away from the Signs so that they are unable to understand.[210]

God is also described as making hearts hard. In describing the Children of Israel, the *Qur'ān* says that they broke the Covenant they had made with God and were thus cursed. As part of the curse, God thus "...made their hearts grow hard."[211] In another segment, the Prophet Moses beseeches God to punish Pharaoh and his people by hardening their hearts so that they cannot believe.[212]

Hearts can also be hardened against remembering God and His signs. "Woe to those whose hearts are hardened against celebrating the praises of God."[213] Implied here is the idea that their hearts are hard of their own accord, not due to the influence of God or His punishment.

Hypocrisy can also be put into hearts by God.[214] He also may let hearts go awry on the wrong path[215] or turn (*ṣarafa*) hearts away.[216] In pondering the inability of people to comprehend the *Qur'ān*, the rhetorical question is asked: "...or are their hearts locked up?"[217]

Within the *Qur'ān*, the perhaps strongest expression of how God deals with those who reject His signs and deny the message is to say that God has "sealed" the *qalb* and thereby forfeited any possibility of understanding on the part of the person. Two verbs

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[210]Reference to God veiling the heart to prevent understanding is also found in 6:25, 17:46, 18:57, and 41:5.
[211]Ibid., 5:14. "*Wa ja'alnā qulūbahum qāsīyatun.*"
[212]Ibid., 10: 88. "*Wa ashdud 'alā qulubihim falā yu'minūn.*" Further reference to God's hardening of hearts is found in 6:43 and 2:74.
[213]Ibid., 39:22.
[214]Ibid., 9:77.
[215]Ibid., 61:5
[216]Ibid., 9:127.
[217]Ibid., 47:24. "*Am 'alā qulūbin iqfāluhā?*"

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are used to signify this "sealing" of the *qalb*- *ṭaba'a* and *khatama*.[218] The more numerous of the two regarding the frequency of references is the former- *ṭaba'a*. Characteristic of the *āyāt* which use this expression of God sealing the heart is the following verse, found in *Sūrat Ghāfar*. Description is made of people who argue about the signs sent by God. "Grievous and odious (is such conduct) in the sight of God and of the Believers. Thus doth God seal up every heart- of arrogant and obstinate transgressors."[219] It is apparent from this verse and all the others which use this expression that according to the *Qur'ānic* accounts, God seals the hearts of unbelievers only after they have denied or ridiculed the signs He has sent.

As for the verb *khatama*, this is used in much the same sense. God seals the hearts of unbelievers or hypocrites to prevent them from comprehending Him and His signs. One of the most stalwart expressions of the severity of this punishment is found in *Sūrat al-An'ām* which asks the rhetorical question: "Say: "Think ye, if God took away your hearing, and your sight, and sealed up you hearts, who-a god other than God- could restore them to you?"[220]

Just as God can seal up hearts, veil them, or put hypocrisy into them, so also can He open hearts to the Message.[221] Unlike the unbelievers, whose hearts are hardened so that they cannot understand the message, the believers are described thus: "And their hearts do soften to the celebration of God's praises."[222]

The softness and pliability of the heart of believers in the Message is characteristic of a healthy heart. However, the heart can have pathologies which diminish its capacity to

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[218]Both of these verbs contain within them the meaning to impress, stamp, or seal something.
[219]*Qur'ān* 40:35. Usage of the verb *ṭaba'a* in relation to God and His sealing of hearts is found also in verses 7:100, 7:101, 9:87, 10:74, 16:108, 30:59, 47:16, and 63:3.
[220]Ibid., 6:46. The use of *khatama* is also found in 2:7, 42:24, and 45:23.
[221]Ibid., 22:54.
[222]Ibid., 39:23.

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comprehend God and His message or cause people to lie about what they truly hold as true in their hearts. "In their hearts is a disease; And God has increased their disease: And grievous is the penalty they (incur), Because they are false (to themselves)."[223]

People may also divide up the *Qur'ān* and focus on the sections of the Book which are allegorical rather than clear in meaning in order to justify their wishes or divide people. "But those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part thereof that is allegorical...."[224]

On the Last Day, the hearts of those who denied the Message will be agitated.[225] And, only those who are in posession of a sound (*salīm*) heart will be successful on that day.[226]

There are other ways in which God may communicate with humans through the heart. Revelation was sent directly to the heart of Muḥammad,[227] and the followers of Jesus received the message straight to their hearts.[228] God knows directly what is in the heart[229] and judges the intentions of the heart. "God will not call you to acount for thoughtlessness in your oaths, but for the intentions in your hearts."[230]

"And know that God cometh in between a man and his heart,...."[231] One of the ways in which God communicates positively to the heart of believers is by sending down tranquility, *sākinah*, to the hearts of believers as a reward.[232] Conversely, fear and terror may be sent to the hearts of unbelievers as a punishment for their denial.[233]

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[223]Ibid., 2:10. "*Fī qulūbihim maraḍun.*" For further references to the heart being diseased, see 5:52, 9:125, 22:53, 24:50, 33:12, 33:32, 33:60, 47:20, and 74:31.
[224]Ibid., 3:7.
[225]Ibid., 79:8.
[226]Ibid., 26:89.
[227]Ibid., 26:194.
[228]Ibid., 57:27.
[229]Ibid., 26:194.
[230]Ibid., 2:225. See also 8:70, 33:5, and 33:51.
[231]Ibid., 8:24.
[232]Ibid., 48:18.
[233]Ibid., 3:151, 33:26, 59:2, 8:12.

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Elsewhere, mention is also made of God removing terror from hearts[234] as well as fortifying them.[235]

As for the unbelievers and those wallowing in sin, it is said that stains appear on their hearts, testifying to the ill they do.[236]

From what is said in the *Qur'ān*, faith and its sister, piety (*taqwā*), are housed in the heart. For the people who believe in God and the Last Day, "...He has written Faith in their hearts."[237] Also, faith is firmly held in the hearts of those who believe[238] and "...God has endeared the Faith to you, and has made it beautiful in your hearts,...."[239] Again, the hearts of believers are contrasted with those of believers. To gain some benefit, people lie with their tongues and say they believe, but do not really hold belief in their hearts.[240] The Bedouin (whom Yūsuf 'Alī identifies specifically here as the Banū Asad) maintained that they had accepted Islām but were wavering in their faith. Those who had already become part of the Community were told to say that "...We have submitted our wills to God, For not yet has Faith entered your hearts."[241]

Islām replaced blood sacrifice with the sacrificing of one's own life in the action of submission to God and His will. In this vein, true *taqwā* is not in sacrificing animals but in *taqwā al-qalb*, "piety of heart."[242] In addition, God is said to test hearts for piety.[243]

Dhikr, remembrance of God, is an extremely important concept for Sufis.[244] This word is found in the *Qur'ān* and is used to illustrate the hearts of Believers and how they

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[234]Ibid., 34:23.
[235]Ibid., 28:10, 8:11, and 18:14.
[236]Ibid., 83:14.
[237]Ibid., 58:22. "*Awlā'ika kataba fī qulūbihim al-īmān.*"
[238]Ibid., 2:118.
[239]Ibid., 49:7.
[240]Ibid., 5:41.
[241]Ibid., 49:16.
[242]Ibid., 22:32.
[243]Ibid., 49:3.
[244]*Dhikr* has, of course, grown to become a form of Muslim meditation such as

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behave. For those sincere in Faith, remembrance of God is said to bring assurance or satisfaction (*taṭma'inn*) to the heart.[245] "God made it but a message of hope, and an assurance to your hearts...."[246] Believers are exhorted also to only give alliance to one who has been permitted by God to remember Him often.[247]

According to the *Bayān al-Farq*, once one has passed through the *maqāmat al-ṣadr*, one passes into the second level, the *maqāmat al-qalb*. To follow the analogies Tirmidhī has already presented, within his map, the *qalb* is as the black portion of the eye, the house within the homestead, the almond within the outer covering of the nut, and the city of Mecca within the confines of the *ḥaram*.[248] Within this layer is housed the "light of faith"-"*nūr al-īmān*"- which means that the person has an acceptance of God's revelation within his or her heart and has moved from the level of *Muslim* to the level of *Mu'min* ("Believer").[249]

The term *qalb* is also used metaphorically to signify "self". Tirmidhī quotes a verse from the *Qur'ān* to demonstrate his assertion. "God said in the story of Jesus: 'Thou knowest what is in my self.' That is, Thou knowest what is in my heart."[250]

In addition to the *nūr al-īmān* which resides in the *qalb*, several other attributes are enumerated in relation to their location within the *qalb*. Included in this list are: the lights of submissiveness (*khushū'*), piety (*taqwā*), love (*maḥabbah*), consent (*riḍā'*),

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repeating the names of God to reach a different level of consciousness. The various Sufi orders (*Ṭarīqāt*) have developed different forms of *Dhikr*, but all forms are centred on the goal of purifying the heart by acting on the subtle heart and clearing its perception. An excellent article dealing with *Dhikr*, especially in the early stages of Persian Sufism is Muhammad Isa Waley's "Contemplative Disciplines in Early Persian Sufism" in Lewisohn's *Classical Persian Sufism: from its Origins to Rumi.*

[245]Ibid., 13:28.

[246]Ibid., 8:15.

[247]Ibid., 18:28.

[248]*Bayān al-Farq, 30.*

[249]Ibid., 87.

[250]Ibid., 83. The *Qur'ān* verse cited by Tirmidhī is 5:116.

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certainty (*yaqīn*), fear (*khawf* and *wajal*), hope (*rajā'*), patience (*ṣabr*), contentment (*qanā'ah*), calmness (*sakīnah*), humility (*ikhbāt*), softness (*līn*), tranquility (*iṭma'nīnah*), refinement (*tamḥīṣ*), and purity (*ṭahārah*).

The *nūr al-īmān* differs from the *nūr al-Islām* (found within the *ṣadr*) because it does not increase or decrease. As stated earlier, expansion and contraction are characteristics of the *ṣadr*, not the *qalb*. Especially characteristic of the *nūr al-īmān* is its production of fear and promise within the Believer as opposed to the fear and promise generated by the *nūr al-Islām*.[251]

Limitlessness is a characteristic of the *qalb* (as opposed to the *ṣadr* which is finite). This quality is alluded to in the famous *Ḥadīth Qudsī*: "Heaven and earth contain me not, but the heart of my faithful servant contains me."[252] Infinitude is especially established in the *qulūb* of the *Awliyā'*. Within their hearts are housed wisdom, mercy, kindness, unveiling, and the radiance of faith- all tokens granted to them by God.[253] Tirmidhī very eloquently states the concept of the heart's limitlessness in response to a question posed by a student:

> A student asked: "Is there a limit to hearts? Indeed, there are those who say: 'There is no limit to hearts because hearts travel to Him Who has no limit. Every friend of God who claims he has reached a station beyond which there is no station is mistaken. For how could anyone attain to the majesty of God (*'aẓamat Allāh*), and yet there be a limit to hearts?'[254]

Tirmidhī likens the light of the heart to the sun's light. The sun's light does not in and of itself increase or decrease. On Earth, perceptions of the apparent changes in the sun's light occur due to external factors which obscure the light such as fog, clouds,

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[251]Geyoushi, 1972:183.
[252]Quoted in Schimmel, 1975: 190.
[253]Geyoushi, 1972: 174.
[254]*Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 96.

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etc..... In like manner, the light of the *qalb* is immutable. However, defects of the *ṣadr* may obscure its light.

> Similarly, if the light of faith, the light of gnosis, or the light of unity be overcome by the darkness of neglect, the clouds of forgetfulness, or the veils of disobedience, and the breast becomes filled with the dust of passion, the fog of the harmful deeds of the self, and despair of God's spirit then the authority of these lights over the self is lessened and they remain limited to themselves behind these veils and curtains.[255]

For one afflicted by these maladies of the *ṣadr*, the only way the infirmity may be removed is through intervention of the Divine who may purify the *ṣudūr* of those who meditate and hold firm to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet.

As Tirmidhī is fond of light and dark symbolism, a further analogy may be added based on this symbolism. The *qalb* may be likened to a lantern, "...which is only fit if lit by the light of piety and certitude."[256] If these qualities are absent, the lantern will not fulfill its function of radiating light. Tirmidhī also likens the *qalb* to a mirror which may be deemed useless if it is covered in a cloth.[257]

Conduct of the individual is a result of the *nafs*. However, this is the limit of the influence of the *nafs* (i.e., the external expressions of the *nafs* and the *ṣadr*). Although the *qalb* is located within the *ṣadr*, the *qalb* is not under the authority of the *ṣadr* or *nafs* but rather, the authority of the *nafs* over the actions of the individual is dependent upon the *qalb* and its authority- "...for the heart is like a king and the self is its kingdom."[258]

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[255] *Bayān al-Farq*, 90.
[256] Geyoushi, 1972: 171.
[257] *Bayān al-Farq*, 91.
[258] Ibid., 30. Tirmidhī goes on to quote a *Ḥadīth*:
The Apostle of God said: "The hand is a wing, the two feet are a post-horse, the two eyes are a means of good, the two ears are a funnel, the liver is mercy, the spleen is laughter, the two kidneys are deceit and the lung is breath. Thus if the king is sound, his troops are also sound, and if the king is corrupt, so also are his troops corrupt." The Apostle of God thus explained that the heart is a king, and that the breast is to the heart as the square (*maydān*) to the horseman.

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As implied by the *Ḥadīth* quoted at the beginning of this work, the soundness of the members is dependent upon the soundness (or health) of the *qalb*.

The *qalb* has the ability to send messages to the *ṣadr*. Tirmidhī explains that these messages may be such things as what he terms "subtleties of wisdom" (*laṭā'if al-ḥikmah*) or "indications of grace" (*shawāhid al-minnah*).[259] As for these messages, they are types of knowledge which are rooted in the *qalb*. Knowledge which has its source in the *qalb* is a particular type of knowledge, completely unlike the type of knowledge found in the *ṣadr*. That knowledge which is centred in the *qalb* is placed there by the Divine; no amount of study or memorization can place it there but once there, it does not depart.

When the individual studies and increases his or her "book" knowledge, the *ṣadr* may become arrogant if the person is not vigilant.[260]

Citing a *Ḥadīth*, Tirmidhī explains that there are two types of knowledge: knowledge of the tongue and knowledge of the heart. Knowledge of the tongue includes the knowledge of the precepts of the religion- the knowledge centred in the *ṣadr*. Knowledge of the heart is a knowledge, an understanding put in the *qalb* of the person by God. It is important to note that Tirmidhī emphasizes that the knowledge of the precepts, law, and traditions of the religion is of little value unless God grants the "inner knowledge" necessary to understand the spirit behind the outer practice of the religion.

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[259]Ibid., 83.

[260]The danger of pride on the mystic path is discussed quite clearly in Tirmidhī's *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*. As one becomes more and more knowledgable of the faith and begins to practice its tenets, the admiration of people may become a problem if one does not strive to let go of all pleasures of the *nafs*, including the pleasure associated with worship. Tirmidhī offers this description in the *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*(53)

> And now the lion that had only pretended to be dead leaps forth from inside him and climbs onto his neck. This occurs when the servant of God enjoys those pleasures which had disappeared after he weaned himself of them, and he is immersed in them once more. His carnal soul is like a fish that has slipped out of the net. It dives and darts about in the water the more violently because it is afraid for itself lest it be caught.

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Tirmidhī terms this particular type of knowledge which has its abode within the *qalb* "*al-'ilm al-nāfi*"- "valuable or useful knowledge."[261] It must be noted, however, that in order for the person to be successful in the realm of nearness to God, both the inner and outer aspects of religion must be fulfilled. Outer knowledge lacking the inner component leads one to hypocrisy while the existence of inner knowledge (or understanding) without the external practice (or denial of the necessity of the *Sharī'ah*) leads one to be a heretic (*zindīq*).[262] To be successful there must be the combination of *'ilm* (knowledge) and *'amal* (practice).

It is within Tirmidhī's elucidation of the characteristics of the *qalb* that we begin to more fully see his theory of knowledge come to light. One may move toward God and begin to strive in the way toward Him with the knowledge acquired by books, but this only leads one as far as the first *maqām.*[263] To move further, to have understanding, one must receive a boon from God allowing this to occur. With this boon, each person has a different grade of understanding and may use that knowledge in various ways congruent with his or her level of understanding.

> Know that there is no limit to the depth of the heart's seas, nor an end to the multitude of its rivers. Wise men (*ḥukamā'*) in these seas resemble pearl divers and in rivers they are like fishermen. Each of them finds and brings forth from them according to God's providence.[264]

Thus, each person on the path may be given a special dispensation of knowledge of a particular type. Tirmidhī lists several such specific types of knowledge given out by God to people who are seeking. Each of these is considered an aspect of wisdom. Someone may receive knowledge (or perhaps realization) of the deceptiveness of the

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[261] *Bayān al-Farq*, 26.
[262] Ibid., 85.
[263] This may be an insertion of some polemic against the rigid adherence to the letter of the law and the rites of the religion only without true understanding of the logic and inner meaning of the religion.
[264] *Bayān al-Farq*, 84.

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pleasures of the world- the essential "glamour" of the world. To another may be given knowledge of the ranks of the pious and the people of learning and those noble of spirit. Eloquence of tongue in the explication of the Grace, Beauty, and Bounty of God or the vision of what God has intended for Eternity are also possible gifts. True understanding of the Power of God and the comprehension of His Signs (*āyāt*) are bestowed to some. Or, the vision of God's Greatness, especially vis-a-vis the utter poverty and dependence of humans upon Him and His bounty may be bestowed. *Ma'rifah* (Gnosis), *Ḥubb* (Love) and God's protection are dispensed to some as well as the vision of God's uniqueness, "...so that he sees within himself (*fī sirrihi*) nothing but God."[265] This is only a partial list of the gifts given; as Tirmidhī points out, there is no limit to these wisdoms.[266]

Unlike the knowledge acquired in the *ṣadr*, from the *maqāmat al-qalb* begins a type of knowledge which is at times ineffable. Tirmidhī terms this type of knowledge *'ilm al-ḥikmah wa-al-ishārah*, the "knowledge of wisdom and [symbolic] allusion."[267] One who is gifted with this type of knowledge begins to experience the removal of the veils covering the Divine and His mystery. This unveiling of the unseen is deemed by Tirmidhī a grace or gift from God which may continually occur constantly even though the *qalb* of the person may weaken or be distracted.[268]

The portrayal of the knowledge which can begin to be expressed in words by the Sufi is likened by Tirmidhī to the foam which arises out of the "sea of the heart":

> Thus just as one who has a disease of the eye uses the foam of the sea as a remedy, so also one whose heart is sick with the love of the world, and the two eyes of whose heart have become diseased, benefits from the words of a wise man. In this way God cures his breast from the sickness which is in it, such as attachment to passion and other evil traits.[269]

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[265]Ibid., 85.
[266]Ibid.
[267]Ibid., 89.
[268]Ibid., 91.
[269]Ibid., 86.

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Reward or punishment in the next life are dependent upon the intentions of the *qalb*. This includes the reward given to a person as a result of their acts of worship; the performance of the required religious duties are only blessed by God if they are performed with the proper intention of the heart. God does not call one to task for the whisperings to evil which occur within the *ṣadr*. However, it is on the basis of the true intentions of the *qalb* that is determined whether one will be successful in the next world.[270]

True piety determines the soundness of one's religion. One may be outwardly pious, but true piety is found only in the *qalb*, and its extent (or existence therein) is known to God alone. "Piety originates in the heart and consists in guarding (*taqwā*) against doubt (*shakk*), polytheism (*shirk*), infidelity (*kufr*), insincerity (*riyā'*), and hypocrisy (*nifāq*).[271] As a reward for piety, God may send *sakīnah*, calmness, to the *qalb*. This is attested by the *Qur'ān*: "He it is who sent down calmness (*sakīnah*) into the hearts of the believers."[272]

Yaqīn[273] is an important concept within Sufi thought. According to Tirmidhī, this quality is located within the *qalb*. To illustrate this concept, he relies upon the word *qalb* itself and its being called thus due to the "...rapidity of its turning over (*taqallub*).[274] To further illustrate this point, a *Ḥadīth* is quoted which provides quite powerful imagery for what the *qalb and* its true nature is. "The heart is like a feather in a waste area of the earth which has become stuck to the trunk of a tree and is being

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[270]Ibid., 85.
[271]Ibid., 87.
[272]*Qur'ān*, 48:4. This translation is Marmaduke Pickthall's as it is used by Heer in his translation of the *Bayān al-Farq*.
[273]In describing the mystic path, Annemarie Schimmel (1975: 140) offers this:
> Science would be of no avail on this Path- only the light of gnosis, the light of certainty gained through intuitive knowledge, could help in approaching the mystery of love.

[274]*Bayān al-Farq*, 165.

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turned over by the wind."[275] God shows His power and mercy by removing the *qalb* from the tree and placing *yaqīn* within the *qalb* to prevent its being blown to and fro between faith and disbelief.

Purity (*ṭahārah*) dwells within the *qalb*. This boon is granted to the *qalb* through God's intervention as a reward for belief. As a consequence of this boon, disease and rancor are removed from the *qalb* through the reliance on and existence of the *nūr al-īmān* within the *qalb*. The unlimited light which is encased within the *qalb* consists of the light emanating from the lights of unification (*tawḥīd*), gnosis (*ma'rifa*), and faith (*Imān*).[276] As previously mentioned, this light found within the *qalb* does not wane but rather continues to illuminate even after death; "...for if he dies a believer, his light remains with him and does not forsake him either in the grave or on the day of resurrection, but remains with him always."[277] On the other hand, with death, the influence of the *ṣadr* and the performance of religious duties (and the blessing received from their proper and mindful performance) cease.

As evidenced in the *Qur'ān*, the root of all sins is hardness of heart. This most pernicious malady causes its sufferer to lack the ability to distinguish between right and wrong.[278] The safekeeping of the heart is a task undertaken by God. Tirmidhī describes the *qalb* as being fastened by one of two "locks" which God uses to seal the *qalb*. For the Believer, God seals the *qalb* with a "lock of power" which allows for contemplation of the Divine Mysteries and the gifts of love and awe. "He seals it with the lock of power and places the key of will in the treasure of His mystery (*ghayb*), which no one approaches save during the pangs of death...."[279] Conversely, for the unbeliever or hypocrite, the "lock of desertion" is employed and its key given to a devil which keeps it

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[275]Ibid.
[276]Ibid., 87.
[277]Ibid., 164.
[278]Ibid., 88.
[279]Ibid.

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until the Day of Resurrection. Thus are *qulūb* locked until the time of death when one will be made aware of what they have earned for only God knows this and this is His secret (*sirr*).

Blindness and sight are also attributed to the *qalb*, not the *ṣadr*. The sight of the *qalb* however, is vastly different from that of the *fu'ād* (to be more fully discussed in the next section). True *ru'yah*, vision, is located within the domain of the *fu'ād*. However, the light of the *qalb* may have visions, but this is only through the influence of its own light.[280] The comprehension of religion is found within the *qalb* and it delights in knowledge, not vision.

Within the *qalb* is placed the Mountain of Faith. More firmly rooted than the Mountain of Islam found in the *ṣadr*, this mountain is pivotal in the preservation of the *qalb*. Corresponding to this Mountain is the bird of the Inspired Self (*al-nafs al-mulhamah*). Still not completely rooted in certainty, this bird "...hovers at times in the valleys of piety, and at other times in the valleys of wickedness;..."[281] Certainty has not yet situated itself and thus the bird suffers from the indecision characteristic of those who do not yet posses *yaqīn*.

iii. The Third Station: The Fu'ād

Fu'ād is based on the root *f-'-d*. From this root comes the verb *fa'ada* which, according to the traditional lexicography, means to hit, strike, or hurt someone's heart.[282] This form may also mean that one kneaded bread, shaped it and put it into the oven.[283] Related to this notion of roasting or baking is *maf'ūd*, the thing baked or roasted, *'ufūd* the place where this action takes place, and *mif'ād*, an instrument used to roast meat.[284] Another form, *fu'ida* or *fa'ida* refers to one having an affliction or disease

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[280] Ibid., 163.
[281] Al-Geyoushi, 1972: 184.
[282] Lane, vol.1, 2323.
[283] "*Fa'da al-khubzah*" Ibn Manẓūr, vol. 2, 1041.
[284] Lane, vol.1, 2324.

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within the heart. *Tafa"da* refers to something burning brightly or fiercely and may refer to the heart to signify the heart's being excited or eager.[285]

Fu'ād at times is used as a synonym for *qalb*. Apparently, the heart is called by this appellation due to it *tafa"ud*, its motion or putting into motion.[286] Poetry is cited in the *Lisān al-'Arab* to demonstrate this meaning for *fu'ād*.[287] Although perhaps at times used to mean much the same thing, most authors make a distinction between the two. They do, however, appear to be related. At times, *fu'ād* is considered the covering (*ghishā'*) of the *qalb*.[288] In other instances, *fu'ād* is used to designate the innermost core of something.[289]

Lane maintains that to most authors *qalb* has a more specific meaning.[290] As mentioned previously in the discussion of the term *qalb*, a *Ḥadīth* points to a distinction between the two through a description of the people of Yemen which implies that the *qalb* is characterised by gentleness and amiability and the *fu'ād* by tenderness.[291]

Vision (*rū'yah*) is ascribed to the *fu'ād* and this further distinguishes it from the *qalb*.[292] Perception occurs through the *fu'ād* and in this sense it may also be used to mean intellect or mind. Thus, the expression *ḥiddat al-fu'ād* means "sharpness or acuteness of mind in a man or sharpness of spirit in an animal."[293] Courage may be centred in the *fu'ād* as well. A cowardly person may be described as having a weak *fu'ād* or no *fu'ād* at all. The *fu'ād* may also be diseased. An affliction located here may be designated as emotional or physical in nature.[294]

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[285]Lane, vol.1, 2323.
[286]Lane, vol.1; 2323.
[287]Ibn Manẓūr, vol.2; 1041.
[288]Ibid.
[289]Ibid.
[290]Lane, vol.1; 2323.
[291]Ibn Manẓūr, vol. 2, 1045.
[292]Ibid.
[293]Lane, vol.1; 2324.
[294]Ibn Manẓūr, vol.1; 1042

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Fu'ād may also be used to refer to the centre of something or the black seed at the core of something.[295] In this sense, it may have a similar usage as the term *lubb*, to be discussed more fully later in this work.

Of the sixteen times that the word *fu'ād* or its plural *af'idat* occur in the *Qur'ān*, it is most often used as *qalb* is used- as one of the sense faculties mentioned along with hearing and sight. Thus, in *Sūrat al-Isrā'*, people are warned to be mindful of their acts "...for every act of hearing, or of seeing or of (feeling in) the heart will be inquired into (on the Day of Reckoning)."[296] At other times when *fu'ād* is used in the sense of being one of the senses, it is said that God created hearing, sight, and the *fu'ād*, but people do not show thanks to Him for this gift. *Sūrat al-Naḥl* describes this state of affairs by stating that God brought humans forth from the womb when they knew nothing and "...He gave you hearing and sight and intelligence and affections: That ye may give thanks to God."[297]

As is possible with the *qalb*, the *Qur'ān* speaks of strengthening (*nuthabbit*) the *af'idat* of believers. Two references occur which describe the *fu'ād* in this fashion. *Sūrat Hūd* declares that the stories of the previous Prophets were related to the Muslims in order to strengthen the *fu'ād*.[298] In a similar vein, the *Qur'ān* was sent down in stages, not in all at once in order to strengthen the *fu'ād*.[299]

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[295]Lane, vol.1; 2323.
[296]*Qur'ān* 17:36.
[297]Ibid., 16:78. It should be noted that this inclusion of the word "affection" is Yusif Ali's own interpretation of the *fu'ād* and its function. The Arabic is as follows: "*Wa ja'ala lakum al-sam'a wa al-abṣār wa al-af'idat la'alakum tashkurūna.*" *Fu'ād* is also used as one of the senses in the following *ayāt*: 6:110, 23:78, 32:9, 46:26, 46:27, and 67:23.
[298]*Qur'ān* 11:120.
[299]Ibid., 25:32. In a footnote on this verse, Yusuf Ali explains this gradual revelation and its relation to the strengthening of the *af'idat* of the Believers in this manner:

> The tremendous task of winning the Arab nation, and through them, the whole world, to Islam, required superhuman patience, constancy, and firmness, and these qualities were strengthened by the gradual promulgation of solutions to each difficulty as it arose.

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Fu'ād is used in a similar fashion to *qalb* again in *Sūrat al-Ana'ām*, where description is made of people who refuse to believe, and God letting their *af'idat* remain in unbelief, enjoying their lives for the time being until such time as they see what they have wrought.[300]

Statement is also made that the *fu'ād* of the Prophet did not lie, and that he was not voicing his own opinion with his dissemination of the revelation he received.[301] In *Sūrat Ibrāhīm*, the Prophet Abraham petitions God on behalf of his offspring and the difficulties they have endured in living in Mecca and establishing the Sacred House. "So fill the hearts of some among men with love (*tahwī*) towards them."[302] In this *āyah*, the *fu'ād* is allied with love or affection, something which does not occur in the references to *qalb* in the *Qur'ān*.

Although for the most part, *qalb* and *fu'ād* are used in similar senses in the *Qur'ān*, they obviously are not interchangeable terms. This is evidenced by an *āyah* in *Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ* which includes within it both terms allied with different verbs referring to them. The *Sūrah* begins with narration of the story of the Prophet Moses and his birth in Egypt. God instructed the Mother of Moses to place the baby in the river to save his life. When the wife of Pharaoh found Moses and decided to keep him, Moses' mother was there (a maid of the wife of Pharaoh) and she almost wavered in her submission to God's plan and disclosed Moses' true origins. It is described thus:

> But there came to be
> A void in the heart (*fu'ād*)
> Of the mother of Moses:
> She was going almost to
> Disclose his (case), had We
> Not strengthened her heart (*rabaṭnā 'alā qalbiha*)
> (With faith), so that she

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[300]Ibid., 6:113.
[301]Ibid., 53:11.
[302]Ibid., 14:37.

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Might remain a (firm) believer[303]

In certain descriptions of the Last Day, *fu'ād* is used. *Sūrat al-Humaza* (The Scandal Monger) asserts that for people who gossip, promote scandal, and vainly pile up wealth, they shall be cast into the Fire, a fire which leaps (*taṭṭal'*) over their *af'idat* and destroys them.[304] The *Qur'ān* also describes the Last Day as a time of great confusion, when people will be running around utterly dazed. This state is especially so for the people who have rejected the Message. They will gaze almost unconscious, and run wildly looking for help, "...Their heads uplifted, their gaze returning not towards them, And their hearts a (gaping) void (*af'idatuhum hawā'un*)."[305]

Tirmidhī devotes relatively little time to his discussion of the *fu'ād*. This is due to its close alliance with *qalb*.[306] For the most part, Tirmidhī describes *fu'ād* in relation to *qalb*, i.e., it is defined by in what ways it is different from *qalb*. Before delving into

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[303]Ibid., 28:10. Yusuf Ali footnotes it thus: "The mother's heart felt the gaping void at parting from her son; but her Faith in God's Providence kept her from betraying herself." Based on this interpretation, (in addition to the previously mentioned instance where *fu'ād* is mentioned in conjunction with affection or love), it may be inferred that the difference between *fu'ād* and *qalb* is that *fu'ād* is not only one of the senses along with hearing and sight but also is a seat of affection.

[304]Ibid., 104:7.

[305]Ibid., 14:43.

[306]Tirmidhī is not known for internal consistency. This trait of his work is demonstrated in the contrast of his notion of *qalb* and *fu'ād* between the *Sīrat al-Awliyā'* and the *Bayān al-Farq*. In the *Sīrat*, Tirmidhī describes the formation of humans; how they were formed from clay and how God fashioned their limbs, etc..... " Then God placed in man's interior a hollow piece of flesh which He called the *qalb* and the *fu'ād*. The inner part of it is called the *qalb* and the outer part is the *fu'ād* (*Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 219)." Later, a further distinction is made regarding the attributes of the *ṣadr, qalb, fu'ād*. The *fu'ād* has eyes and can behold the light of *tawḥīd*.

> The power of *ma'rifa*, reason, knowledge, comprehension, memory and understanding are in the breast. And God placed *ma'rifah* in the heart and comprehension in the *fu'ād* and reason in the brain with memory as its companion. And in its abode He gave lust a door to the breast- then the smoke of these lusts which passion brought with it rises up and is conveyed into his breast. The smoke surrounds his *fu'ād* and the *fu'ād*s eyes remain in this smoke... and it blocks the *fu'ād*s eyes from seeing the light of reason. (*Sīrat*, 221).

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these differences it should be noted that *fu'ād* is likened by Tirmidhī to the pupil within the black part of the eye, the mosque in Mecca, the closet or storeroom in the house, the wick in the lamp, and the kernel within the almond.[307]

It is located within the *qalb* and influences the *qalb*. Thus, when a man profits from knowledge, it is first the *fu'ād* which obtains benefit and then the *qalb*. A person at this level on the spiritual journey to the Centre is called an *'Ārif*. The *fu'ād* is the seat of gnosis (*ma'rifat*), spiritual thoughts (*khawāṭir*), and vision (*ru'yah*). Indeed, the light present within the *fu'ād* is the "light of gnosis" (*nūr al-ma'rifah*).[308]

Ru'yah is perhaps the most significant attribute of the *fu'ād*. Both the *qalb* and the *fu'ād* see (i.e., they are given the attribute of *baṣār*), but the essence of their sight is different and they are dependent upon one another. The vision of the *qalb* is a beholding only of the light which is within the *qalb*, the *nūr al-īmān*. The *fu'ād* truly sees and experiences the vision of externalities. Thus, the *fu'ād* sees and the *qalb* knows. "If knowledge and vision are combined, the unseen becomes the seen and the servant becomes certain in his belief...."[309] If, however, the *fu'ād* does not see, the *qalb* cannot use its knowledge and both are of little use. To demonstrate this notion, Tirmidhī gives the analogy of a blind man called to give testimony. Although he may know the truth, he cannot give testimony in court because he cannot say that he saw anything occur.[310]

Based on the root meaning of *fu'ād, fā'idah* ("to benefit or obtain benefit")[311], Tirmidhī maintains that the *fu'ād* is thus called because it "...sees the benefit of God's love."[312]

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[307] *Bayān al-Farq*, 30 &31.
[308] Ibid., 31.
[309] Ibid., 163.
[310] Ibid., 166.
[311] This is a popular etymology, that is, basing *fu'ād* on the root *f-y-d* and being related to the word *fā'idah*.
[312] Ibid.,.

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Although *fu'ād* is said to be a more precise word in its meaning, as Tirmidhī describes them, the difference between *qalb* and *fu'ād* is very subtle, as is the difference between two of the names of God, *al-Raḥmān* (The All Merciful) and *al-Raḥīm* (The All Compassionate). These two names are based on the same Arabic root, *r-ḥ-m* and are found at the beginning of each chapter of the *Qur'ān* (except for *Sūra al-Tawba*). Each name is allied with one of the terms for heart. *Qalb* has as its guardian *al-Raḥmān* for the Believer places his or her trust in *al-Raḥmān* through the "light of faith" within the *qalb*. To assist His servant, God binds the *qalb*[313] in order to safeguard his or her faith from wavering in the face of hardship. "This is because the heart knows and as a knower requires the binding of support (*rabṭ al-ta'yīd*), so that it may find peace in remembrance of God."[314] *Fu'ād* has as its guardian *al-Raḥīm*. It has no need to be bound, but due to its ability to see, may experience emptiness (*farāghah*). To overcome this emptiness, God's guidance is needed to strengthen the *fu'ād*.

In his discussion of the *fu'ād*, Tirmidhī refers to the saying of a gnostic (*'ārif*) about the meaning of the word:

> The inner heart is called "*al-fu'ād*" only because there are a thousand valleys (*alf wādin*) in it. The valleys of the inner heart of a gnostic flow with the lights of God's beneficence, grace, and bounty.[315]

In the final section of the treatise, Tirmidhī describes who the *'ārif* is and what his significance is. At this stage within the Journey, one with this appellation may be likened to a mountain of God due to the firmness of his vision of God and nearness to the Divine as a result of his level of understanding through the "light of gnosis".[316]

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[313]This refers to the *Qur'ān* and its' use of this notion of *rabṭ al-qalb* as found in *Sura al-Kahf*, "We bound their hearts when they stood forth (18:14)." Further discussion of this notion of "binding the heart" is found in the previous section on *Qalb*.
[314]*Bayān al-Farq*, 167.
[315]Ibid., 167.
[316]Ibid., 247.

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Within his discussion of the *'ārif*, Tirmidhī reveals some of this theory of the esoteric meanings of the Arabic alphabet.[317] As a sacred language and the basis of all knowledge, the Arabic letters in themselves have meaning to them. Furthermore, names in and of themselves have meaning to them and indicate the essence of that thing. God entrusted Adam with naming all things and the basis of this naming is the alphabet.[318] Thus, Tirmidhī lists various meanings to each of the root letters in the word *'ārif*, *'-r-f*. For example, the letter *'ayn* in this word signifies that the *'ārif* has learned (*'alima*) and acknowledged (*'arafa*) God's glory (*'izzah*), grandeur (*'aẓamah*), sublimity (*'ulū*) and knowledge (*'ilm*). As for *rā'*, this denotes that the gnostic has seen (*ra'ā*) God's lordship (*rubūbīyah*), compassion (*raḥmah*), and sustenance (*rizq*). Finally, the *fā'* means that:

> ...He has comprehended (*faqiha*) religion for God's sake, has understood (*fahima*) His desire, has abandoned (*fāraqa*) all that perishes, has fled (*farra*) from all temptation (*fitnah*) to the Omniscient Opener, and that the abiding light of his heart transcended (*fāqa*) all that perishes.[319]

From the *nūr al-ma'rifat* comes the fear of as well as the hope for predestination.[320] Centred on the *fu'ād* is the Mountain of Gnosis atop which is the Bird of the Blaming Self (*al-nafs al-lawwāmah*). The visiting places of this bird fluctuate between valleys of

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[317]Within the confines of the *Bayān al-Farq* Tirmidhī does not go into the more theoretical aspect of his ideas on Arabic language. Rather, he lists specific qualities which correspond to certain letters such as those comprising the words *'ārif* and later *lubb*. One may consult the *Sīrat al-Awliyā'* for a more thorough discussion of the theory behind his ideas on this matter.

[318]*Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 223-224. Tirmidhī goes on to further explain his theory of the esoteric knowledge of the Arabic language:

> God taught Adam knowledge and the roots [foundation] of knowledge. Knowledge consists of the names; the roots of knowledge are the twenty-eight letters of the alphabet. Languages have issued from the letters.... Contained in the letters is the complete knowledge of the primal beginning, knowledge of God's attributes and His names.... They also contain the knowledge of His regulating the world which covers from the creation of Adam to the day of the appointed time.

[319]*Bayān al-Farq*, 247.

[320]Ibid., 244.

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exultation (*tarafful*), might (*'izz*), pride (*iftikhār*), and joy (*farah*) and valleys of need (*iftiqār*), destitution (*maskanah*), poverty (*faqah*), and scorn of itself (*izdirā'*).[321] Although perhaps farther on the mystic quest and thus more stable, the self-blaming soul is still deceitful and beguiling.[322]

From within the area of this Mountain called "Gnosis", one may reach the furthest limit and obtain the knowledge of what abides (*baqā'*) and what passes (*fanā'*) as well as the "...vision of the bounty of God and His favors."[323] With this knowledge, the *'ārif* can fully comprehend the extent to which all creation depends upon the Creator as He is truly the only thing which abides. Notions of the self and independent self-existence scatter at this point as the realization that there is nothing worth acknowledging or contemplating save God begins to root itself. At this stage, the grace of God consistently flows to the seeker and he is never cut off from that favor granted to him. God does not leave one at this stage to fend for him or herself. The Bounty and Grandeur of the Divine are so great at this level that one may be overcome by them. "The light of his inner heart (*fu'ād*) has drowned in the contemplation of His grandeur, for he is in the sea of God's endless bounties, to the depths of which no one reaches."[324]

iv. The Fourth Station- The Lubb

Lubb and its plural form *albāb* are based on the root *l-b-b*. This word most commonly refers to a "kernel", "pith", the interior of fruit.[325] In a verb form it may mean to get the meat or kernel of something by peeling or removing the exterior.[326] By extension, it may be used to mean the best or purest of anything; the choicest part. In

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[321]Ibid., 245.
[322]Ibid., 246.
[323]Ibid., 247.
[324]*Bayān al-Farq*, 248.
[325]Manfred Ullmann, *Worterbuch der klassischen arabischen Sprache* (Wiesbaden, 1983), vol. II:1, pp. 75, 82.
[326]Ibid., vol. II:1, 75.

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this sense, a person deemed the purest or best of his or her tribe or the purest in terms of genealogy may be called "*lubāb qawmih*".[327] *Lubb* may also refer to something's self, substance, or essence.[328]

Based on this notion of *lubb* as the essence or core of something, it may also be used as a synonym for *qalb*. More specifically, in the biological sense, it may refer to veins attached to the *qalb*.[329] Lane cites the phrase "*banātu al-lubb*" which he translates as: "Certain veins in the heart; the sources of tenderness, affection, kindness, or compassion."[330] One may also be described using this word (*labb*) or one of its derivatives (*lablabat*) if the person is full of gentleness, empathy, and close to people.[331] Thus, a woman who is affectionate toward her husband may be described as "*imra't labbat*".[332]

Intelligence is also implied by this word based again on its notion of being the essence or best part of something/someone (that is, in the sense of understanding put into the choicest part of someone).[333] From this basis, *lubb* may be considered a synonym for *'aql*.[334] The verb "*talubbu*" means that "he became posessed of knowledge."[335] "*Dhu lubbin*" means "Possessing, having, or a person of understanding, or intelligence."[336] *Labīb* refers to someone posessing the characteristics of cleverness, understanding, and sound judgement.[337]

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[327]Ibn Manẓūr, vol.3, p. 331.
[328]Ullmann, vol. II:1,83.
[329]Lane, vol. 2, 2643.
[330]Ibid.
[331]Ullmann, vol. II:1, 82.
[332]Lane, vol. 2, 2642.
[333]Ullman, vol. II:1, 75, 77, 83..
[334]Although it is listed as a synonym, in a certain sense, especially within the paradigm of Sufism, these two terms appear to have a very different sense to them. This will be expanded later in Tirmidhī's discussion of these terms.
[335]Lane, vol. 2, 2642.
[336]Ibid., vol.2, 2643.
[337]Ullmann, vol. II:1, 75, 76.

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Another meaning of the root is to focus on something or to dwell or stay in a place. From this meaning comes the invocation used during the *Ḥajj*, "*Labbaika*",[338] which includes within it the sense that the person is coming to remain in the sacred area and perform the pilgrimage with a sense of focus and utter mindfulness toward God.

Labbat refers to the pit above the breast between the collar bone where a necklace rests or also where a knife is applied in the slaughter of an animal.[339] Another form of the root, *labbab*, refers to the drawing together of the outer garments over this portion of the body. Ibn Manẓūr cites a *Ḥadīth* which refers to the Prophet praying in a *thawb* pressed around his chest (*mutalabbab*).[340] In another context, this may also mean that the person is putting on a robe and girding oneself for a fight.[341]

Within the *Qur'ān*, only the plural form, *albāb* is used. Each of the sixteen times it is used, it is used in addressing people- "O those who have understanding." For example, *Sūrat Ibrāhīm* describes the torments of Hell, when God will call people to account. This is intended to be a warning for people to realize that there is only one God. "Let men of understanding take heed."[342]

Aside from the warning given to the "People of Understanding", there is also the statement that God has sent messages, but only the "People of Understanding" may understand them. God gives wisdom (*ḥikmah*) to those He wishes to endow with this gift, but none will grasp the meanings of the signs He has sent down but the "People of Understanding."[343]

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[338]Ibn Manẓūr, vol.3, 330.
[339]Ibid., vol.3, 331. Also, Ullmann, vol. II:1, 75.
[340]Ibn Manẓūr, vol.3, 331.
[341]Lane, vol.2, 2643.
[342]*Qur'ān* 14:52. This manner of admonition to humans to take heed to the Message or the signs in nature is also given in 2:179, 2:197, 3:190, 5:100, 12:111, 38:29, 38:43, 39:9, 39:21, 65:10.
[343]Ibid., 2:269.

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Dhikr, remembrance, appears to be allied with the *Qur'ānic* usage of *albāb* for often when the "People of Understanding" are addressed, the word allied with it is *dhikr*, or a verbal form of it. *Sūrat Ṣād* relates the notion that a book has been sent to humans "...that they may meditate on its Signs, and that men of understanding may receive admonition."[344]

Tirmidhī's treatment of *lubb* within the *Bayān al-Farq* is the most comprehensive as it is the most important of the *maqāmāt*. This *maqām* is the last of the stations describable by words, but not the absolute last station. Within the auspices of his discussion of *lubb*, Tirmidhī includes his theories on *'aql*, an extensive discussion of the characteristics of one who has reached the most inner levels, sainthood, a further discussion of Light, and his notion of the Spirit (*rūḥ*).

The treatment of the term *lubb* begins with the conclusion of the previous analogies used to describe the other levels previously discussed. *Lubb* is analogous to the light of seeing in the eye, the light of the wick within the lamp, and the hidden fat within the kernel of the almond.[345] All of the other layers of the heart are in fact shields for the *lubb*. They are similar to one another in meaning and act in conjunction with one another. "They are the lights of religion, for religion is one, even though the ranks of its people are different and varied."[346]

Lubb and *'aql* are equated initially by Tirmidhī in the beginning of the section on the *lubb*. He goes on to use the analogy of a garden to explain the growth of *lubb* and *'aql* within the individual. Within the "ground of unification" (*tawḥīd*) and the soil of the "light of uniqueness" (*nūr al-tafrīd*), God plants the seed of reason and intelligence. Water from the sea of glorification is used to water it until the roots grow and become filled with the lights of certainty. God tends to His seedlings directly in the "Garden of

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[344]Ibid., 38:29. In Arabic, the last part reads thus: *"Wa-li-yatadhakkara ūlū al-albāb."*
[345]*Bayān al-Farq*, 31.
[346]Ibid.,.

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Contentment" and keeps them walled so that the beasts of the self cannot enter. This is the most lush, most resplendent garden as it is the garden of faith and has God Himself as its owner and ruler.[347]

Lubb is broken down by Tirmidhī to illustrate the meaning of the letters it is composed of. As one only reaches this stage through the succor of the Divine and His blessings, the first letter of the word, *lām*, refers to *luṭf*, God's overwhelming kindness toward His servants. The doubled *bā'* points to the favors and goodness (*birr*) bestowed by God in the Beginning (*bidāyah*) as well as the ongoing (*baqā'*) blessings (*barakah*) granted to those who strive in the way toward quelling the Self to approach the Real.[348]

Within this station lies the "Light of Unification", the *nūr al-tawḥīd* and "Light of Uniqueness", the *nūr al-tafrīd*. "It is the most perfect light and the greatest power."[349] Light plays an extremely important part in the *Bayān al-Farq*, and especially within the discussion of *lubb*. As previously discussed, each *maqām* has within it a Mountain; the greatest and most secure of the mountains is the *Lubb*. Tirmidhī describes the light which is experienced here as an "elemental light". It is the source of all other lights.

> It resembles an axis (*quṭb*)[350] which is permanent and does not move. The intellect is the support of religion, for all lights are founded upon and encompass it. These lights are not perfected nor is their power made effective save through the soundness of the intellect and its substance, nor are they made firm except by its firmness, nor/ do they exist except by its existence.[351]

The Mountain of the Light of Unification is also likened to Mount Qāf in relation to all other mountains on Earth.[352]

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[347]Ibid., 168.
[348]Ibid.,.
[349]Ibid., 31.
[350]Bracket is my inclusion.
[351]*Bayān al-Farq*, 166-167.
[352]Mount *Qāf* is a mythical mountain range (at times identified as the Caucasus Mountains) which is said to surround the Earth and enclose the ocean. In addition it is

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From the *nūr al-tawḥīd* comes the fear and hope of the "realities". This fear and hope is centred upon the absolute contemplation of God and His absolute Unity. As a result of this contemplation, one places all hope, fear, truly all trust in the only One worthy of having faith in.[353]

Residing at this level is the bird of the "peaceful self" (*al-nafs al-muṭma'innah*). It is similar to the spirit (*rūḥ*) as it has been purified from evil intention. It also has the attribute of luminosity due to its perfect obedience to God.[354] Whereas the other birds of the other levels fly within valleys of both positive and negative attributes (for example, the bird of the mountain of gnosis flies in the valleys of exultation and the vision of God's blessings as well as the valleys of destitution and poverty), the bird of the mountain of the *lubb* flies only within valleys of contentment (*riḍā*), modesty (*ḥayā*), firmness in unification, and the sweetness which comes from the remembrance of God.[355]

This Light is essentially ineffable. Only those given the ability by God to discuss it may truly describe its grandeur. Tirmidhī gives an interesting analogy to illustrate the power of this Light upon the person who has reached this level and may now be called a *muwaḥḥid* ("unifier"). The *nūr al-tawḥīd* may be likened to the sun in the summer. At its zenith, it covers the person with its light and without obstruction by clouds or fog radiates its full power. No shadow exists. "Nothing comes between this servant and the

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considered to support the earth and marks the edge of the world. Analogy may be drawn between Mount *Qāf* and the Buddhist Mount Meru, the *axis mundi* in Buddhist cosmology. Many scholars consider the origin of this concept in Islam in pre-existing Iranian tradition (which considers *Alburz* the mythical mountain range at the edge of the world and the home of the gods). For more information, see the full article "*Ḳāf*" in the second edition of the Encyclopedia of Islam, vol. 4 (pp. 400-402).

[353] *Bayān al-Farq*, 246-247.

[354] Ibid., 246.

[355] Ibid., 245.

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sun, so that the sun encompasses his head, burns it with its heat, and changes both the habit and nature of the servant."[356]

To further illustrate his idea of light within the heart of the believer, Tirmidhī cites the famous "Light Verse" of the *Qur'ān* (24:35) as a parable which symbolizes this light and the layers of light within the heart. Unfortunately he only mentions this verse and its implications without providing a further exegesis for it. "One who reflects, with the help of God, in order to comprehend something/ of the meaning of this verse will find indications of its meaning from the beginning of the Book (i.e. the *Qur'ān*) to the end."[357]

Life itself exists only as a result of the spirit (*rūḥ*) which dwells within. Tirmidhī conceives of this spirit as a light given by God to His creatures; "...the spirit is from his command, its subsistence is through God and through it the self exists."[358] The lights present within each of the *maqāmāt* are also allied with this notion of "spirit". Consequently, Tirmidhī maintains that the life of the *ṣadr* is through the spirit (or light) of Islam; the life of the *qalb* is through the spirit of faith; the life of the *fu'ād* is through the spirit of gnosis and vision ; and the life of the *lubb* is "...through the spirit of unification and detachment from [one's own] strength and power and adherence to the True."[359]

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[356]Ibid., 249.
[357]Ibid., 252. Hava Lazarus-Yafeh (p. 271), in her discussion of the similarities between Tirmidhī and al-Ghazzālī cites a work by Tirmidhī entitled the *Tafsīr Āyat lā Sharqiyya wa lā Gharbiyya ma'a Ta'wīl Arba'īn Ḥadīth* which includes an explication of the "Light Verse" in further detail and also quotes of many of the types of *Ḥadīth* quoted by al-Ghazzālī in his *Mishkāt al-Anwār*. Al-Geyoushi, in his article "Al-Tirmidhī's Theory of Gnosis" describes an emanationist theory of Tirmidhī in terms of the layers of Light which emanate from God and are conceived by Tirmidhī as nine kings. This theory is derived by Tirmidhī based on the "Light Verse" and is found (according to al-Geyoushi's research) in his works *Ghawr al-umūr, al-A'ḍā" wa'l-nafs*, and *Ṣifat al-qulūb*.
[358]*Bayān al-Farq*, 254.
[359]Ibid., 254.

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In essence, the names of layers of the heart, the *maqāmāt al-sirr*, are only expressions of language to designate something which is ineffable. "In reality they are symbolic allusions (*ishārāt*) to the lights which God has established [in the heart] from the treasures of His light."[360]

What then are the characteristics of one who has been given the bounty of reflection and understanding by God and has now attained the status of *Muwaḥḥid*? As evidenced by the *Qur'ān*, only one possessed of understanding may reach the level of the *lubb*. These people are addressed directly in the *Qur'ān* (the *ulū al-albāb* mentioned in the section on *lubb* in the *Qur'ān*) and are bestowed with special gifts by the Merciful as a reward for their striving and servitude.[361]

One in possession of the "peaceful self" may be called *ṣiddīq* (honest, righteous, upright). God has favored this person by allowing him or her to imbibe light.[362] Other epithets are given. These include "Divine Knower" (*al-'ālim al-rabbānī*), "Spiritual Gnostic" (*al-'ārif al-rūḥānī*), and "Illumined Forerunner" (*al-sābiq al-nūrānī*).[363] Although not specifically equated by Tirmidhī in this work, the implication appears to be that a person at this level may also be called a "Friend" of God.[364]

Tirmidhī enumerates six types of life which are possible for people.[365] First is the "life of the self (*nafs*) through the spirit (*rūḥ*); this is the lowest form, basic existence such as the life of animals. Above this is the life of the heart which has been illumined

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[360]Ibid., 252.
[361]Ibid., 169.
[362]Ibid., 246.
[363]Ibid., 250.
[364]Ibid., 254. Tirmidhī uses the word "*awliyā*". Heer translates this as "saints" but "Friends" is perhaps a better word less filled with perhaps misleading connotations.
[365]This schema seems different from the schema of the philosophers and their concept of the *nafs* as having three components, the vegetative, animal, and human. For more information on this see Fazlur Rahman's *Avicenna's Psychology* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), 24-69. This includes a discussion of Avicenna's notions of knowledge and its acquisition.

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by faith. There is also a life of the self through knowledge. Knowledge gives life; one without knowledge may be considered dead. One who has turned toward God in repentance experiences another type of life as does one who moves to the next level and with God's help is able to see beyond his own striving through the light of repentance. "Finally, there is the life of the servant [freed] from the darkness of regarding his own deeds by the vision of God's favor and His kind regard for him."[366] Beyond this there are other aspects but Tirmidhī declines to describe them as their realities may be distressing to the hearts of people who have not attained that level.[367]

Tirmidhī conceives of the struggle of the *qalb* and *nafs* as of paramount importance in the Spiritual Quest.[368] For the *muwaḥḥid*, the *nafs* has been entirely quelled.

> He has humbled his self (*nafs*) and scorned it, and it has become with respect to the light of his heart as a mirror to his eye. He looks at his self with the light of his heart and thus knows it and by knowing it arrives at the knowledge of his Lord.... The Apostle of God said: "he who knows his self knows his Lord."[369]

By quelling the *nafs*, the adept in essence dies a type of death. This death is in essence a true awakening to Life and the true beginning of the Spiritual Path. Tirmidhī cites a *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet which makes reference to the experience of the resurrection in this life. For one who dies, after death he or she experiences the journey

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[366] *Bayān al-Farq*, 252.

[367] Ibid.,. This is not the only instance where Tirmidhī makes reference to a reluctance to further disclose knowledge which may not be readily understandable to all, and thus may deter those earlier on the journey. Although the majority of the treatise is relatively comprehensible, the final section is quite convoluted. It seems that Tirmidhī is masking some esoteric knowledge in an idiom which may be accessible at least in part to certain adepts but perhaps too arduous for those only beginning.

[368] This very negative attitude toward the *nafs* (as well as his light symbolism) may perhaps relate to some Manichaean influence upon Tirmidhī. According to Zarrinkoob, Manichaeanism is an essentially gnostic religion. "The soul, prisoned in the body, and its rescue is to be attained by gnosis,...."(p.146)

[369] *Bayān al-Farq*, 252.

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of his spirit from his body and out of the phenomenal world. Similarly, the one who has died to his or her self can experience this even before death of the body.

> Similarly one who has died in himself but is alive in his Lord knows that he himself has no control over harm or benefit, or death or life, or resurrection. His heedlessness has been revealed to him, his resurrection has arrived and he has become alive through his Lord, for God has surrounded him with His protection, taken care of him, supported his heart, and enlivened it. Thus he has seen by the light of the truth which no one else has seen.[370]

One who has achieved this level of restraint and death to the self is likened to a martyr who has given his life on the way to God. As God causes the martyr to live in Him, so does the *muwaḥḥid* live. Actually, the one who has killed his *nafs* may be deemed of higher station than the martyr. He has "...slain his self (*nafs*) with the sword of unification and has become alive to God."[371]

Being at this high level of closeness carries a great burden beyond the slaying of the self. Much affliction is suffered by such a person. He or she lives in this world but is no longer of it. As the Prophet said: "The people most afflicted in the world are the prophets, then those most like them, and then those most like them."[372] Those who are able to see with clear Vision experience both the fullness of the Beauty and the extent of the Power of the Divine.

Often a person at this level is shunned by people. His or her thought processes are beyond logic as he or she has left the normal human paradigm of logic and reasoning. Due to this, the person may seem insane and delusional but this is due to the straying from normal convention by which the person's life is now characterized. With the absolute realization that there is only God to rely upon, there is little need for the

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[370]Ibid., 253.
[371]Ibid.,.
[372]Cited in the *Bayān al-Farq*, 250. Tirmidhī also cites the famous *Ḥadīth*: "If you knew what I know you would laugh but little, weep much, and pour dust upon your heads."

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accolades and friendship of people.[373] Part of this affliction lies in the person feeling no contentment except in the remembrance of God. As Tirmidhī describes it, the person is at once hungry yet fed, naked but clothed, seeing and blind, wise but foolish, healthy and sick, strong and weak, and desiring but without a physical object of desire.[374]

The person is "drowning in the sea of unity" (to use Tirmidhī's expression). Not only is the person drowning, but he or she sees him or herself drowning. The self is lost and his or her only concern is God and the removal of any particle of *shirk* from his or her innermost secret core (*sirr*).[375]

Only the *muwaḥḥid* truly possesses a heart and with this heart, he or she "...gazes with his heart from his Lord to His creation."[376] With this gazing the adept may see the creation in its absolute dependence upon its creator and thus fully realize the folly of relying on any but God alone; a full awareness of Absolute Lordship (*rububiyyah*). By viewing creation in this fashion, it is also possible to dispel the error of turning toward "...the extreme of denying God's attributes (*ta'ṭīl*), so that he will see his inability to perceive His lordship, or towards the extreme of likening things to God (*tashbīh*)...."[377]

While the *muwaḥḥid* endures much hardship for the station he or she has achieved, in another sense, the life of such a person is extremely sweet. The only desire or goal left in the life of one at this rank is the sweetness of the remembrance of God and fully loving and serving Him. God is the keeper of his or her heart and he or she is thus exalted to a high rank.[378]

Perhaps the greatest gift bestowed to the *muwaḥḥid* is the boon of understanding the "life of the heart". This favor is granted in a number of areas such as the spirit of

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[373] *Bayān al-Farq*, 250.
[374] Ibid.,249.
[375] Ibid., 249.
[376] Ibid.,.
[377] Ibid.,.
[378] *Bayān al-Farq*, 252.

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wisdom (*ḥikmah*), truthfulness (*ṣidq*), love (*maḥabbah*), sanctity (*wilāyah*), the spirit of witnessing to God (*shahādah*), and the spirit of the message (*risālah*), speech (*kalām*) and friendship (*khillah*).[379]

Through the help and mercy of God, the *muwaḥḥid* can see the utter majesty and uniqueness of God. Through this vision and realization, it is possible for the person to utterly and completely rely on God without recourse to the self or any outside influence.[380]

"Let me explain to you something of the attributes of those hearts which are cared for by their Lord."[381] With this beautiful sentence Tirmidhī begins his discussion of the characteristics of the "Friends" (*Awliyā'*) and the exalted position they have attained through the bounty of God. The hearts of such people are the "...storehouses of wisdom, seats of mercy, sources of vision, treasuries of gnosis, and houses of generosity."[382] Each moment the heart is filled with God's mercy and He purifies their deepest secrets (*asrār*) from polytheism, doubt, and hypocrisy.

From within the foundation of the purified inner secret, God plants the seed of gnosis and waters it from water of the sea of contentment. The seed is nurtured by His mercy and compassion. He ripens the fruits through the light of gnosis and completes the maturity through the laws of the *Sharī'ah* and the utter reliance of the servant upon the Served. Upon this fertile soul He places the throne.

Using the imagery of the investiture of a King, Tirmidhī goes on to describe the treatment of the Friend by God. Clothed in piety after the removal of all pretense, God then robes the Friend with His Grace, crowns him with His friendship, and continues his purification through guidance, remembrance, an love.

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[379]Ibid., 254.
[380]Ibid., 255.
[381]Ibid., 255.
[382]Ibid.

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> He gave him a pure drink from the cup of unification filled from the sea of uniqueness and mixed with the sweetness of His bond with God, until/ he began to exist through God alone, his inner secret (*sirr*) far removed from all else but God. His self rose to His service like a slave deprived of all rights, like one forced andvanquished, or like a captured prisoner.[383]

God, in His mercy, then took pity on His servant and favored him with friendship and caused him to draw near. Refuge, support, and strength were then bestowed for the Friend to be able to endure the trials which inevitably come. Grace is conferred upon the person to an unfathomable degree and He has caused rivers of bounty to flow before him. These rivers include truthfulness (*ṣidq*), purity (*ṣafā'*), contentment (*riḍā'*), fear (*khawf*), love (*maḥabbah*),hope (*rajā'*), patience (*ṣabr*), and glorification (*ta'ẓīm*) .[384]

Closeness to God and the receiving of His bounty and grace are the most amazing things one can experience. The sweetness of this boon is truly beyond expression or comprehension. With this comes the pangs of separation felt when one moves even slightly away from God. Tirmidhī describes this as a pain "...which is greater than any pain of sickness, injury or misfortune suffered by people, or by those struck with whips or those cut by sharp [instruments]."[385]

At this point, Tirmidhī goes on to elucidate his concept of *'aql*. According to Tirmidhī, *lubb* and *'aql* are related but not synonymous. This difference is likened to the contrariety between the light of the sun and the light of a lamp. Both give light, but the nature of each is different according to degrees. Similarly, there are not two people

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[383]Ibid., 256.
[384]Ibid., 257.
[385]Ibid. The pain of separation the lover feels when distant from the Beloved becomes an extremely strong theme in later Sufi poetry, especially among the Persian Sufis. Tirmidhī's expression of this love and longing may perhaps prefigure the later expressions by Aḥmad al-Ghazzālī and Rūmī.

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absolutely alike in terms of reason or intellect. God does not bestow His gifts equally among people but rather in differing degrees.[386]

The verb *'aqala* is used to refer to the act of binding or restraining something such as (in perhaps the original usage of the word) a camel by a rope called an *'iqāl*.[387] Tirmidhī offers this explanation of the word: "...reason binds (*ya'qil*) the self from following its passions, just as the halter (*'iqāl*) keeps cattle from their pasturage."[388]

'Aql has many attributes. In name it is one and is both obeyed (*matbū*) and dependent (*mutafarri*). The power of the *'aql* increases and decreases in accordance with how much one relies upon it or acts in harmony with it. Within the maturity of a human, there are stages (*maqāmāt*) of *'aql*. Most basic of these stages is the stage of "innate reason", *fiṭrah*. While in this stage, one is able to distinguish between the fundamental difference between good and evil or profit and loss. It is attained by one who has reached the age of maturity[389] or one who has recovered from insanity.

Following this is the stage called the "reason of evidence" (*'aql al-ḥujjah*). Reason and its light (*nūr al-'aql*) have now been established themselves firmly enough within the individual through the "light of support" (*nūr al-ta'yīd*) that one may now be deemed

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[386]Ibid., 169.

[387]Lane, v.1; 2113.

[388]*Bayān al-Farq*, 171. It is interesting that at this early stage, or at least according to Tirmidhī, *'aql* does not appear to have the negative connotations which it later becomes allied with perhaps due to the later rise (and rivalry) of Philosophy in the Islamic Tradition. Whereas Tirmidhī describes the "binding" power of *'aql* here in a very positive sense, its binding power may also be described as hobbling a person from grasping that which is beyond the comprehension of human language and the confines of the human mind- The Ineffable.

[389]Ibid., 170. Tirmidhi says, "*yukhrij bihi al-ṣibā*", literally, "one who has emerged from childhood." Presumably this would mean the age of majority according to Islamic Law when it becomes incumbent upon one to perform the religious obligations of fasting, prayer, etc...

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worthy enough to be addressed (*al-khiṭāb*) by God. This stage may be achieved when one reaches puberty (*balagha al-ḥulum*).[390]

Most useful is the next stage, the stage of the "reason of experience" (*'aql al-tajribah*). By experience coupled with knowledge of the religious precepts, one may become wise and use this knowledge for the benefit of society. Another stage is what Tirmidhī calls "inherited reason" (*'aql al-mawrūth*) which occurs when a wise man (*'aqīl*) has a pupil who does not posses the teacher's intellect but God, through His mercy bestows something of the teacher's understanding upon the pupil after the death of the master.[391]

It is possible for these types of reason to be found among people who do not believe in God or the Last Day. These people (Tirmidhī lists the wise men of India and the Philosophers), however, do not use their reason for the benefit of society as a whole (as one in possession of reason should) but only use their reason for selfish motives.[392]

Of all the types, the most beneficial is "balanced reason", *al-'aql al-mawzūn.* It is most beneficial as one possessing this type of reason has been blessed with the light of God's guidance (*nūr hidāyat Allah*). Balanced reason is equated with intellect, *lubb.* In addition, Tirmidhī here equates it with the word *'aql* in general, which he reasons is used in an allegorical manner to mean knowledge (*al-'ilm*). Those who posses intellects, the *Qur'ānic* "*ulū al-albāb*", are truly knowers of God. "However, not every rational man (*'aqīl*) is a knower of God, although every knower of God is rational."[393] Rationality is to be used in order to better understand the commands of God such as His prohibitions, promises, threats, and exhortations. One may only truly obtain an understanding of this through God's help and bounty.

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[390]Ibid.
[391]Ibid.
[392]Ibid.
[393]Ibid., 171.

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Synonymous with *'aql* are the words *ḥilm, nuhā, ḥijr,* and *ḥijā.* "The word 'reason' is interchangeable and general, and it is the only one of these words which can be used as a verb and conjugated."[394]

Reason alone is not without its limitations. Tirmidhī makes reference to the folly of reliance upon reason alone to discern the actions of God. Once one reaches an exalted level of closeness to God wherein God is the person's friend, helper, and supporter, that person's perception and reality are beyond normal logic. Thus, for those who have not reached this level, the miracles of the saints and the ascension of the Prophet, the *mi'rāj* are rather easily discounted as they do not fit the normal boundaries of logic. If one cannot understand what is created within the self such as dreams or the true nature of the self, how can he or she discern (without God's help) the actions of God, something which are superior to reason?

> But how, O my brother, can you perceive with a compound instrument created in time the lordship of an omnipotent Creator and an omniscient Lord, who does what He will and judges as He wishes?... Indeed, reason is only an evidence from God for His servant. It is a compound instrument for undertaking the service [of God] not for perception of [His] lordship.[395]

Learning (*fiqh*) is another word for knowledge (*'ilm*). True learning, however, is the learning of the heart (*fiqh al-qalb*). As was mentioned in the section dealing with the *ṣadr,* it is here, in the *ṣadr* where religious learning and memorization enter the body and are seated. However, true comprehension of religion is in the heart and is placed there by God as a lamp. Only sincere Believers are in possession of this ability to truly comprehend the religion. An infidel or hypocrite has no access to this endowment.[396]

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[394]Ibid.
[395]Ibid., 251.
[396]Ibid.

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For the truly learned person (*faqīh*), the bounty of the "light of sight" (*nūr al-baṣar*) has been bestowed by God Himself.

> ...He is the one indicated by the Apostle of God when he said: "If God wishes good for His servant, He gives him comprehension in religion and shows him the faults of his self and the sickness of this world and its remedy." He in whom God combines both of these types of knowledge is known as the red sulphur (*al-kibrīt al-aḥmar*), the greatest knower (*al-'ālim al-akbar*), and the most wise (*al-labīb al-awfā*).[397]

The two types of knowledge referred to in the previous quotation are the knowledge of the person well versed in the outer aspects of the religion according to the *Sunnah* and *Shārī'a* who also can use reason to deduce the meaning of these precepts. Another type of knowledge is necessary though. This is the knowledge of one versed in the interior knowledge of the religion (*al-faqīh fī bāṭin al-'ilm*). One retaining this knowledge knows "...of ideas in the heart (*khawāṭir*) in accordance with reality and the vision of lordship."[398]

Tirmidhī makes a distinction between one who is learned (*faqīh*) and one who is wise (*ḥakīm*) on the basis of the merit of each in relation to their comprehension of the *Qur'ān* and its *āyāt* which contain both a legal as well as a symbolic meaning (*ishārah*). The former deduces the meaning of the *āyāt* in accordance with the "evidence of God" (*ḥujjat Allāh*). However, the *ḥakīm* is able to arrive at deductions in agreement with the will of God and "...points to His way by means of subtle allusions (*laṭā'if al-ishārāt*). [Thus he deduces] what is in accord with [God's] unification and reveals an intention to which God agrees."[399]

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[397]Ibid., 172.
[398]Ibid.
[399]Ibid.

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IV. Concluding Remarks

Tirmidhī himself explains the reason behind his writing of this treatise:

> One of the people of learning and understanding has asked me to explain the difference between the breast (*ṣadr*), the heart (*qalb*), the inner heart (*fu'ād*), and the intellect (*lubb*), as well as what is beyond them, such as the depths of the heart (*shaghāf*), and the places of knowledge. I should like to explain [this] to him with the help of God, for He makes easy all that is difficult, and I therefore ask His help.[400]

Relying heavily on the use of the concepts in the *Qur'ān*, Tirmidhī constructs his elucidation of the Mystic Journey as a pilgrimage through the layers of the Heart to the Centre wherein the Divine resides. His intention appears not to be to produce a handbook on the specific practices needed to attain the innermost level, but rather a description of the progress through the levels as he understood them or indeed experienced them. Such a journey cannot be perfectly elucidated and Tirmidhī does not try to describe something he cannot. The *Bayān al-Farq* may be seen as a book written by a traveller. On the way mountains are traversed, valleys are visited by birds, and levels of understanding reached. Although a methodology for reaching the inner layers is not expressed explicitly, the implications are there. In essence, one must rely on God for His Mercy and Guidance.

This schema used by Tirmidhī and Nūrī is a new one. Although the *Qur'ān* and *Ḥadīth* refer to the Heart and its function as an organ of perception, this mapping of the layers of the heart to be traversed in order to truly know or understand is a new one. Later Sufis (such as Simnānī) would also include similar maps with additions or deletions, but this schema appears to be the first of its kind.

Stations (*maqāmāt*) and states (*aḥwāl*) on the Sufi path are numerous and elucidated in varying manners by different Sufis. For some, the *maqāmāt* are permanent, for

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[400]Ibid., 28.

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others, such as al-Muḥāsibī, it is possible for the *aḥwāl* to endure as well. Although Tirmidhī implies that only the last *maqām*, the *Lubb* is permanent, its Mountain an *axis mundi*, his usage of the term *maqāmāt* to describe the progress of the adept on the Path implies a more fixed nature to the borders crossed through the layers of the Heart.

> The *maqāmāt* are in reality so many states of being or degrees of consciousness leading to union, and they stand related to each other in a hierarchical order so that even when transcended they remain a permanent possession of the seeker who has passed through them. Moreover, to possess a *maqām* means not only to experience it outwardly, but also to be wholly transformed by it and,... to *be* that *maqām*.[401]

It is in *becoming* the *maqām* that purity and the change from *Muslim* to *Mu'min* to *'Ārif* and finally *Muwaḥḥid* occurs. Herein lies Tirmidhī's psychological theory. As he (and most other Sufis) conceives it, movement through the *maqāmāt* entails a removal from the heart of the soot which has become encrusted on it, a removal of the maladies which make it strenuous or even impossible for the Divine to enter the Heart. Only when the heart is made ready for the entrance of God can it truly be called a Heart. Until then it is only a lump of flesh.

For Tirmidhī, overcoming the influence of the *nafs* is pivotal to preparing the heart for the alchemical reactions it must undergo to fulfill its true nature. Religious observance is the first step to quelling the *nafs*. Once the first step is taken, the seeker is helped on the Path by the Sought. Essentially, the heeding of the religious precepts (which begins within the *ṣadr*) is the beginning of the practice of the remembrance (*dhikr*) of God in all aspects of life. It is through remembrance that the journey progresses. *Dhikr* is "...the most positive thing in all the world because it sets up the

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[401]Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "The Spiritual States in Sufism" in his book *Sufi Essays*, 2nd ed. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991.

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most powerful vibration towards the Heart. The Prophet said: 'There is a polish for everything that taketh away rust; the polish of the Heart is the invocation of Allāh."[402]

Subsequent movement through the layers of the Heart and the degrees of knowledge or understanding associated with them appears to be the result of a gift from God, not the result of particular practices or the guidance of a spiritual master.[403] Activation of the four stations is done through the light and spirit which illuminates them. Tirmidhī's's vivid light symbolism carries with it his theory of Knowledge and Gnosis.

Tirmidhī is clear in his ideas of knowledge, that is the knowledge acquired by study and memorization. This is only the knowledge found in the first *maqām*, the *ṣadr*. It is knowledge of the tongue. Only when this knowledge moves to the second *maqām*, with the addition of faith and its light can true knowledge be attained. However, the *maqāmāt* and the knowledge in each are cumulative. In order to be a *Muwaḥḥid*, one must posses *ma'rifah*; to be an *'Ārif*, one must posses *īmān*; and to be a *Mu'min*, one must first be a *Muslim*, possessing the necessary religious knowledge and practice needed to be called by that name. To be truly successful, that is, to be truly among the *ulū al-albāb*, three components must be fulfilled: *'ilm*, *'amal*, and *fahm*.

Central to the *Bayān al-Farq* are Tirmidhī's ideas on *ma'rifah* or rather *lubb*, for this is what the *qalb* (in the comprehensive sense) is created for. *Ma'rifah* is indeed the central goal for many Sufis. Qushayrī in his *Risāla* defines *ma'rifah* as used by the Sufis. It is not as the scholars use it; it is not equivalent to *'ilm*, knowledge. *Ma'rifah* is a state

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[402]Lings, 59. Tirmidhī does not elaborate in this treatise on the steps one takes to further cleans the Heart other than religious observance. Later, more elaborate systems are worked out for invocations of the Names of God and the combinations and numbers of recitations needed to facilitate a true cleansing of the heart. For more information on this, see Carl Ernst's chapter "The Names of God, Meditation, and Mystical Experience" in his *Shambhala Guide to Sufism* (Boston & London: Shambhala, 1997), 81-119.

[403]As it appears that Tirmidhī did not have a Master to guide him on his spiritual journey, it makes sense that he would not regard this as necessary for others to attain the highest Stations.

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acquired by a person as a result of his perseverance to purify the self of the baser instincts.

> Then he enjoys a goodly nearness to God, who verifies him as true in all his states. The temptations of his soul stop, and he does not incline his heart to any thought that would incite him to other-than-God for, when he becomes a stranger to men and is free of the calamities of his soul, when he is purified of joy in, and concern for other-than-God, when his intimate prayers with God Most High in secret are constant, when he is sure in every glance of Him, and when God inspires him by making him aware of His secrets concerning his destiny, he is, at a time, called a "gnostic" (*'ārif*) and his state is called "gnosis" (*ma'rifah*).[404]

Tirmidhī, however, does not focus exclusively on *ma'rifah* and the characteristics of the *'ārif*. Within his schema, this is only a stage on the path, it is a means to an end, not the end itself. As described earlier, the true goal is to reach the level where one may receive the appellation of *Muwaḥḥid*, the Unifier who is truly a possessor of *lubb*. This person is truly blessed with the boons given by God of wisdom, truthfulness, love, and friendship.

At this early stage of theorizing about the importance and types of knowledge accessible to Sufis, there appears not to be the strong negative connotation later associated with *'aql* as something which is possibly a hindrance on the Path.[405] With *ma'rifah* allied more closely to the third station, the *fu'ād* (although he does discuss *ma'rifah* in the section on *lubb*), *lubb* and *'aql* are of higher degrees of significance than *ma'rifah* in this treatise. "Intellect is the Crown Prince of Gnosis...."[406] It is created by

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[404]Al-Qushayrī, *The Principles of Sufism by al-Qushayrī*, B. R. Von Schlegell (trans.) (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1990), 317.
[405]Javad Nurbaksh in his *Psychology of Sufism* (p.93) describes this notion thus: "Now *'aql* (intellect) is a word connoting binding, connection or tying down, the prerequisite of which is to be limited. The reality of remembrance (*dhikr*) through God and in God is free of all limitations and thus incompatable with intellect."
[406]Al-Geyoushi, 1971: 168.

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God and given to His servants as He sees fit and it binds the adept by keeping him or her away from negative influence, bound to the quest for true Knowledge of God.

Early on, including in the *Qur'ān*, *'aql* is allied with the *qalb* and its knowledge.[407] A *Ḥadīth* attributed to 'Umar allies *dhihn*, *'aql*, and *ḥifẓ* with the heart. 'Umar asks the people present a question which he himself answers.

> What do you say concerning the man whom at times his *dhihn* is not present with him, nor his *'aql* nor his *ḥifẓ*, and at times his *dhihn* and *'aql* are present with him? The heart has a 'darkening-cover' like the clouds obscuring (the light of) the moon. So when that (covering) envelopes the heart, then his *'aql* and *ḥifẓ* depart from him. And when it [the 'darkening-cover'] is dispelled from his heart, his *dhihn*, *'aql*, and *ḥifẓ* are brought (back) to him.[408]

It thus appears as though Tirmidhī is not inventing a new connotation of the term *'aql*; he is drawing on how the term was used at his time.

Based on our research, it may be said that Tirmidhī does not stray far from the normal (at least at that time) usage of the terms he employs (although he does perhaps add to some an emphasis that is not readily apparent). Although *lubb* is not directly mentioned in the *Qur'ān* as a centre within the heart allied with knowledge (as *qalb* and *fu'ād* are), nor is it as frequently mentioned as the term *qalb* is, Tirmidhī assigns to it the highest station. This inner *maqām*, whose name connotes not only intellect, but the core or pith of something as well as an aspect of affection, is the last of utterable stations. It is important to reiterate that there are stations beyond this one which are ineffable.[409]

Although this is perhaps too early a treatise to directly ally itself with the later conception of *fanā'*, the *muwaḥḥid*, in his (or her) divorcing from the world, utter

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[407] *Qur'ān* 22:46.
[408] Douglas S. Crow. *The Role of 'Aql in Early Islamic Wisdom With Reference To Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq*. Ph.D. Dissertation. Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 89.
[409] *Bayān al-Farq*, 32.

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reliance on God and His bounty, and the fact that his or her *nafs* is now dead may be likened to one who is fully annihilated in God.

Another interesting feature of this early treatise is its inclusion of the notion of the pangs of separation felt by the person as long as he or she is kept separate from the Divine.[410] This early description in terms which ally it with love poetry may be seen as a precursor for the later Persian Sufi descriptions of the Beloved and the lover as describing the relation between God and His seeking servant found in the later work of Aḥmad al-Ghazzālī (d.1126) and Mawlānā Jalāluddīn Rūmī (d. 1273).

Tirmidhī's ideas often harken to a much older way of obtaining knowledge. His birthplace of Khorāsān was an incredible place clamoring with religious ideas through the centuries; on its soil has thrived Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, and Manicheanism. Islām is only one of the later systems to come into this area so embued with the quest for the Spirit. Fritz Meier maintains that this knowledge conceived as being obtained by a focus on training the inner sense organs, the heart, the spirit, or the "secret" (*sirr*), is a system which "...is in part traceable all the way back to the mysteries of antiquity."[411]

Although it is not entirely possible to deduce an entire *Weltanschauung* from one diminutive treatise, Tirmidhī's basic view of life and the place of the Mystic within it is there. A Mystic with ascetic tendencies, he focuses on the need to purify the self in order to begin to move toward the only Real in the Universe. Light permeates this Universe, and with this light comes the Knowledge of the One who may afford true freedom from the slavery to the self and its desires. This is only possible, however, with the permit of the One. Only by His intervention, His granting of the Ultimate Boon may one advance. It is the most difficult journey possible but also the greatest one. Tirmidhī offers this description:

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[410]Ibid., 257.
[411]Fritz Meier, *Essays on Islamic Piety and Mysticism*, John O'Kane (trans.) (Leiden, Boston, and Koln: Brill, 1999), 25.

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The possessor of this rank fears the departure of this light and the passing of this happiness just as the man who has become used to the light of the sun fears its passing and its setting. A poet has said: The light of His sun has risen in hearts. It enlightens [them], for it does not set. Each of them delights in the Beloved, And takes from Him his allotted share.[412]

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[412] *Bayān al-Farq*, 255.

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